

6. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to report to the Economic and Social Council at its first regular session of 1979 and to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session on the progress achieved in the implementation of the present resolution.

*90th plenary meeting  
20 December 1978*

### 33/147. Assistance to the Palestinian people

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolutions 3236 (XXIX) and 3237 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974,

*Recalling also* Economic and Social Council resolutions 1978 (LIX) of 31 July 1975, 2026 (LXI) of 4 August 1976 and 2100 (LXIII) of 3 August 1977,

*Taking into consideration* the reports of the Secretary-General on assistance to the Palestinian people,<sup>119</sup>

*Taking note* of the report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme on its twenty-fifth session<sup>120</sup> and of the response of the Administrator of the Programme,<sup>121</sup>

1. *Endorses* the resolutions of the Economic and Social Council concerning assistance to the Palestinian people;

2. *Calls upon* the United Nations Development Programme, in consultation with the specialized agencies and other organizations within the United Nations system, to intensify its efforts, in co-ordination with the Economic Commission for Western Asia, to implement the relevant resolutions of the Economic and Social Council in order to improve the social and economic conditions of the Palestinian people by identifying their social and economic needs and by establishing concrete projects to that end, without prejudice to the sovereignty of the respective Arab host countries, and to provide adequate funds for that purpose.

*90th plenary meeting  
20 December 1978*

### 33/148. United Nations Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolutions 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI) of 1 May 1974 containing the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, 3281 (XXIX) of 12 December 1974 containing the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States and 3362 (S-VII) of 16 September 1975 on development and international economic co-operation,

*Recalling* Economic and Social Council resolution 2119 (LXIII) of 4 August 1977,

*Having considered* the recommendation of the Economic and Social Council, contained in its resolution 1978/61 of 3 August 1978, that the General Assembly at its thirty-third session should give favourable consideration to and take definitive action on convening

at the earliest possible time a United Nations conference on new and renewable sources of energy and should, in that context, define the objectives, scope, nature and timing of such a conference, as well as the required preparatory arrangements, including inter-governmental machinery,

*Cognizant* of the importance of developing new and renewable sources of energy in order to meet requirements for continued economic and social development, particularly in the developing countries,

*Aware* of the importance of increasing the industrial capacity of the developing countries,

*Stressing* the importance of intensive international co-operation in the field of new and renewable sources of energy,

*Aware* of the significant progress achieved in recent years in the technology relating to the development and utilization of new and renewable sources of energy,

*Cognizant* of the need to identify concrete measures for the transfer of relevant technology to developing countries and for financing arrangements, both bilateral and multilateral, for the development of new and renewable sources of energy in developing countries,

*Convinced* of the need to exchange information on the latest developments and experience in the practical application of new and renewable sources of energy,

*Bearing in mind* the report of the Secretary-General on the feasibility of holding an international conference on new and renewable sources of energy,<sup>122</sup>

1. *Decides* to convene an international conference on new and renewable sources of energy in 1981 under the auspices of the United Nations;

2. *Decides* further that the United Nations Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy should have the objective of elaborating measures for concerted action designed to promote the development and utilization of new and renewable sources of energy, with a view to contributing to meeting future over-all energy requirements, especially those of the developing countries, in particular in the context of efforts aimed at accelerating the development of the developing countries;

3. *Defines* the scope of the Conference as confined to the area of such new and renewable sources of energy as solar, geothermal and wind power, tidal power, wave power and thermal gradient of the sea, biomass conversion, fuel-wood, charcoal, peat, energy from draught animals, oil shale, tar sands and hydropower;

4. *Decides also* that, in the light of the foregoing and with a view to formulating recommendations for concrete action, the Conference should concentrate, *inter alia*, on the following:

(a) Analysis of the state of technology related to new and renewable sources of energy;

(b) Identification of the potential, particularly in the developing countries, for utilization of new and renewable sources of energy;

(c) Assessment of the economic viability of the use of new and renewable sources of energy in the light of the technologies now available and those being developed;

<sup>122</sup> E/1978/68.

<sup>119</sup> E/6005 and Add.1, E/1978/55 and Add.1-3.

<sup>120</sup> *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1978, Supplement No. 13 (E/1978/53/Rev.1).*

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 55.

4. *Appeals* to Member States, regional and interregional organizations and other intergovernmental bodies to provide financial, material and technical assistance to Tonga to enable it to establish the social and economic infrastructure that is essential for the well-being of its people;

5. *Invites* the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Food Programme, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Bank and the International Fund for Agricultural Development to bring to the attention of their governing bodies, for their consideration, the special needs of Tonga and to report the decisions of those bodies to the Secretary-General by 15 August 1980;

6. *Requests* the appropriate organizations and programmes of the United Nations system to maintain and increase their current and future programmes of assistance to Tonga, to co-operate closely with the Secretary-General in organizing an effective international programme of assistance and to report periodically to him on the steps they have taken and the resources they have made available to assist that country;

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General:

(a) To mobilize the necessary resources for an effective programme of financial, technical and material assistance to Tonga;

(b) To establish a special account under the United Nations Trust Fund for Special Economic Assistance Programmes for the purpose of facilitating the channelling of contributions to Tonga and urges Member States to contribute generously to that account;

(c) To ensure that adequate financial and budgetary arrangements are made to continue the organization of the international programme of assistance to Tonga and the mobilization of assistance;

(d) To keep the situation in Tonga under constant review, to maintain close contact with Member States, regional and other intergovernmental organizations, the specialized agencies and international financial institutions concerned and to apprise the Economic and Social Council, at its second regular session of 1980, of the current status of the special economic assistance programme for Tonga;

(e) To arrange for a review of the economic situation of Tonga and the progress made in organizing and implementing the special economic assistance programme for that country in time for the matter to be considered by the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session.

*104th plenary meeting  
14 December 1979*

#### **34/133. Assistance to the Palestinian people**

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolutions 3236 (XXIX) and 3237 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974 and 33/147 of 20 December 1978,

*Recalling also* Economic and Social Council resolutions 1978 (LIX) of 31 July 1975, 2026 (LXI) of 4 August 1976 and 2100 (LXIII) of 3 August 1977,

*Taking into consideration* the report of the Secretary-General on assistance to the Palestinian people,<sup>106</sup>

<sup>106</sup> E/1979/61 and Add.1 and 2.

*Taking note* of the report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme on its twenty-sixth session<sup>107</sup> and the response of the Administrator of the Programme,<sup>108</sup>

1. *Notes with satisfaction* the action taken by the Administrator and the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme in response to General Assembly resolution 33/147;

2. *Endorses* decision 79/18 of 26 June 1979 of the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme<sup>109</sup> on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 33/147;

3. *Urges* the relevant agencies, organizations, organs and programmes of the United Nations system to take the necessary steps for the full implementation of Economic and Social Council resolutions 2026 (LXI) and 2100 (LXIII);

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the Economic and Social Council and to the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

*104th plenary meeting  
14 December 1979*

#### **34/134. World Tourism Organization**

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolutions 32/157 of 19 December 1977 and 33/122 of 19 December 1978, concerning the World Tourism Organization,

*Noting with satisfaction* the report prepared by the World Tourism Organization and circulated under a note by the Secretary-General in response to General Assembly resolution 33/122,<sup>110</sup>

*Noting* the work accomplished by the World Tourism Organization in the field of tourism and the steps it has taken in this regard, especially the operational activities for the promotion of tourism, in particular for the benefit of developing countries,

*Recognizing* that the programmes and activities of the World Tourism Organization in the field of tourism contribute, in accordance with its statutes,<sup>111</sup> to global economic and social development and to international understanding, peace and progress,

*Further noting* that the World Tourism Organization will convene a World Tourism Conference at Manila in September 1980 to examine past and present trends in tourism with a view to defining guidelines for its future development, planning and promotion to enable States to formulate tourism development strategies,

1. *Requests* the World Tourism Organization to continue its efforts towards the future development and promotion of tourism, especially in the developing countries, through closer international co-operation pursuant to its statutory objectives and having regard to its central and decisive role in the field of tourism;

2. *Urges* States to give due attention and co-operation to the preparatory work of the World Tourism Organization for the World Tourism Conference, to be held at Manila in 1980, and to ensure representation at

<sup>107</sup> *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1979, Supplement No. 10 (E/1979/40 and Corr.1).*

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 111.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, Supplement No. 10 (E/1979/40 and Corr.1), chap. XXI, sect. D.

<sup>110</sup> E/1979/99.

<sup>111</sup> E/4955, annex.

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to prepare and submit to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session a report which takes into consideration the provisions of paragraph 2 of Assembly resolution 32/161.

*84th plenary meeting  
5 December 1980*

### 35/111. Assistance to the Palestinian people

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolutions 33/147 of 20 December 1978 and 34/133 of 14 December 1979.

*Recalling also* its resolutions 3236 (XXIX) and 3237 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974.

*Recalling further* Economic and Social Council resolutions 1978 (LIX) of 31 July 1975, 2026 (LXI) of 4 August 1976 and 2100 (LXIII) of 3 August 1977.

*Taking note with satisfaction* of the report of the Secretary-General on assistance to the Palestinian people,<sup>241</sup>

*Also taking note* of the report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme on its twenty-seventh session,<sup>242</sup>

1. *Notes with satisfaction* the action taken by the Administrator and the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme in response to General Assembly resolution 34/133;

2. *Urges* the relevant agencies, organizations, organs and programmes of the United Nations system to take the necessary steps for the full implementation of Economic and Social Council resolutions 2026 (LXI) and 2100 (LXIII);

3. *Requests* that assistance to the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza should be rendered through United Nations agencies and organs in co-operation and consultation with the local Palestinian economic, social, educational and municipal organizations in these occupied territories;

4. *Requests* that assistance to the Palestinian people in the Arab host countries should be rendered through United Nations agencies, in consultation with the parties concerned and in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the Economic and Social Council;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

*84th plenary meeting  
5 December 1980*

### 35/202. Technical co-operation among developing countries

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolutions 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI) of 1 May 1974, containing the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, 3281 (XXIX) of 12 December 1974, containing the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, and 3362 (S-VII) of 16 Sep-

<sup>241</sup> A/35/227 and Add.1.

<sup>242</sup> *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1980, Supplement No. 12 (E/1980/42/Rev.1).*

tember 1975 on development and international economic co-operation.

*Recalling* its resolution 33/134 of 19 December 1978, in which it endorsed the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries,<sup>243</sup>

*Recalling also* its resolution 34/117 of 14 December 1979, in which it approved the substantive and organizational arrangements for the first high-level meeting on the review of technical co-operation among developing countries,

*Having examined* the report of the High-level Meeting on the Review of Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries,<sup>244</sup>

*Noting* decision 80/46 of 30 June 1980 of the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme<sup>245</sup> on technical co-operation among developing countries,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the High-level Meeting on the Review of Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries;

2. *Decides* that, henceforth, the High-level Meeting shall be called the High-level Committee on the Review of Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries, with the same functions and frame of reference as those outlined in recommendation 37 and other relevant recommendations of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries;

3. *Requests* the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme to convene the session of the Committee from 1 to 8 June 1981 under the same organizational and procedural arrangements as were made for the session of the High-level Meeting;

4. *Urges* all States to take immediate steps to implement the decisions adopted by the High-level Meeting;

5. *Invites* all participants in the United Nations Development Programme to undertake the necessary preparations for the session of the Committee in 1981 and to be represented at a high level;

6. *Requests* the executive heads of the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations development system, including the regional commissions, in close co-operation with the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, to contribute to the preparation of the session of the High-level Committee in 1981 and to participate actively therein.

*97th plenary meeting  
16 December 1980*

### 35/203. Implementation of section VIII of the annex to General Assembly resolution 32/197 on the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system<sup>246</sup>

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolutions 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI) of 1 May 1974, containing the Declaration and the

<sup>243</sup> *Report of the United Nations Conference on Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries, Buenos Aires, 30 August-12 September 1978* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.78.11.A.11 and corrigendum), chap. I.

<sup>244</sup> *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 39 (A/35/39 and Corr.1).*

<sup>245</sup> See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1980, Supplement No. 12 (E/1980/42/Rev.1)*, chap. XI.

<sup>246</sup> See also sect. X.B.3, decisions 35/439 and 35/441.

2. *Urges* all Governments to take immediate steps to implement the agreements reached by the Committee at its second session;

3. *Requests* the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme to convene the third session of the Committee prior to the commencement of the thirtieth session of the Governing Council of the Programme, to be held in 1983;

4. *Decides* that the organization of the session of the Committee in 1983 shall provide for plenary meetings and for meetings of only one working group;

5. *Invites* all participants in the United Nations Development Programme to undertake the necessary preparations for the third session of the Committee and to be represented at a high level;

6. *Requests* the executive heads of the organs, organizations and bodies in the United Nations system, including the regional commissions, within their spheres of competence, programmes of work and available resources and in close co-operation with the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, to contribute to the preparation of the third session of the Committee and to participate actively therein.

*64th plenary meeting  
19 November 1981*

### 36/45. United Nations University

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolutions 2951 (XXVII) of 11 December 1972, 3081 (XXVIII) of 6 December 1973, 3313 (XXIX) of 14 December 1974, 3439 (XXX) of 9 December 1975, 31/117 and 31/118 of 16 December 1976, 32/54 of 8 December 1977, 33/108 of 18 December 1978, 34/112 of 14 December 1979 and 35/54 of 5 December 1980.

*Having considered* the report of the Council of the United Nations University on the work of the University,<sup>12</sup>

*Noting* decision 5.2.1 of 2 October 1981, adopted by the Executive Board of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization at its one hundred and thirteenth session,

1. *Welcomes* the development of the activities of the United Nations University under five themes with which the Council of the University expressed its general agreement at its seventeenth session;

2. *Notes with satisfaction* the decision to move towards a six-year medium-term perspective;

3. *Welcomes* the opportunities under the medium-term perspective for greater collaboration at various levels between the United Nations University and the United Nations system and academic communities and institutions;

4. *Notes* that the enlarged scope of the programmes and activities of the United Nations University in promoting advanced research and training on global problems affecting mankind and in ensuring a more effective global dissemination of knowledge calls for greater resources for their implementation, and decides to encourage efforts to promote understanding of this enlarged scope of the work of the University, thereby helping to generate increased financial support from various sources, including non-governmental organizations;

5. *Earnestly appeals* to all Member States to give special attention to those encouraging developments and to contribute generously and urgently to the Endowment Fund

<sup>12</sup> *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 31 (A/36/31).*

of the United Nations University and, additionally or alternatively, to make operating contributions to the University in order to enable it to fulfill effectively its global mandate.

*64th plenary meeting  
19 November 1981*

### 36/70. Assistance to the Palestinian people

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolutions 33/147 of 20 December 1978, 34/133 of 14 December 1979 and 35/111 of 5 December 1980,

*Recalling also* its resolutions 3236 (XXIX) and 3237 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974,

*Taking note* of Economic and Social Council decision 1981/171 of 22 July 1981 and recalling the relevant resolutions of the Council,

*Taking note with satisfaction* of the report of the Secretary-General on assistance to the Palestinian people,<sup>13</sup>

*Taking note also* of the report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme on its twenty-eighth session,<sup>14</sup>

1. *Notes with satisfaction* the action taken by the Administrator and the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme in response to the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly;

2. *Urges* the relevant agencies, organizations, organs and programmes of the United Nations system to take the necessary steps, in consultation and co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, for the full implementation of the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council on assistance to the Palestinian people;

3. *Strongly urges* all parties concerned to facilitate the full implementation of all the projects approved by the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme at its twenty-sixth session;<sup>15</sup>

4. *Requests* the United Nations Development Programme to undertake direct execution of the projects in the occupied Palestinian territories, including Jerusalem, in coordination with the relevant local Palestinian organizations and bodies;

5. *Also requests* that United Nations assistance to the Palestinian people in the Arab host countries should be rendered through the specialized agencies, programmes, organs and other bodies of the United Nations system in consultation with the parties concerned and in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

*84th plenary meeting  
4 December 1981*

### 36/71. International Year of Shelter for the Homeless

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 35/76 of 5 December 1980, in which it expressed the view that an international year de-

<sup>13</sup> A/36/305 and Add.1 and 2.

<sup>14</sup> *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1981, Supplement No. 11 (E/1981/61/Rev.1).*

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 1979, *Supplement No. 10 (E/1979/40 and Corr.1)*, chap XXI, sect. D, decision 79/18; see also A/36/305, para. 10, and DP/410.



voted to the problems of homeless people in urban and rural areas of the developing countries could be an appropriate occasion to focus the attention of the international community on those problems,

*Recognizing* the grave and generally worsening situation of the homeless in the developing countries,

*Emphasizing* that the building, improvement and maintenance of shelter, related physical infrastructure and social facilities can contribute significantly to national development,

*Convinced* of the imperative need to mobilize effectively the considerable skill and resources that the homeless themselves possess for building, improving and maintaining their own shelter and neighbourhoods,

*Convinced also* that, because of their complexity and magnitude, the problems of the homeless require co-ordinated and concerted action at all levels,

*Confident* that an international year of shelter for the homeless could serve as a means of increasing public awareness at the local, national, regional and global levels and set in motion a process which would lead to significant improvement in the situation of the homeless,

*Considering* that human settlements activities are among the important policy measures for the attainment of the goals and objectives of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade,<sup>16</sup>

*Noting with satisfaction* the follow-up action so far taken by Member States with regard to the implementation of the recommendations of Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements,<sup>17</sup> and the support being provided by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) to developing countries to facilitate that action,

*Recalling* in that connection its decision 35/424 of 5 December 1980 and Economic and Social Council resolution 1980/67 of 25 July 1980 on guidelines for international years and anniversaries,

*Taking note* of Economic and Social Council resolution 1981/69 B of 24 July 1981 on the proposal to declare an international year of shelter for the homeless,

1. *Decides*, in principle, to designate 1987 as the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless, on the understanding that the criteria for financing and organizing international years set out in the annex to Economic and Social Council resolution 1980/67 are complied with;

2. *Requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) to prepare a proposal containing a specific programme of measures and activities to be undertaken prior to and during the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless and to report to the Economic and Social Council through the Commission on Human Settlements;

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General to prepare, on the basis of that proposal, a report on the organizational matters regarding the holding of the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless in 1987, including the availability of voluntary funds, to be submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session through the Economic and Social Council during 1982;

4. *Appeals* to all States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and the public at large to indicate appropriate support for the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless.

*84th plenary meeting  
4 December 1981*

<sup>16</sup> See resolution 35/56, annex, paras. 159 and 160.

<sup>17</sup> See *Report of Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, Vancouver, 31 May-11 June 1976* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.76.IV.7 and corrigendum), chap. II.

## 36/72. Human settlements

### A

#### REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolutions 32/162 of 19 December 1977 on institutional arrangements for international co-operation in the field of human settlements and 34/116 of 14 December 1979 on the strengthening of human settlements activities,

*Recalling also* its resolutions 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI) of 1 May 1974, containing the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, 3281 (XXIX) of 12 December 1974, containing the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, and 3362 (S-VII) of 16 September 1975 on development and international economic co-operation,

*Further recalling* the Vancouver Declaration on Human Settlements, 1976,<sup>18</sup> and the other recommendations of Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements,<sup>19</sup>

*Affirming* the importance of the promotion of human settlements development as a distinct and specific policy measure for the attainment of the goals and objectives of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 35/56 of 5 December 1980,

*Reaffirming* that human settlements development should be viewed and taken into account in the context of the national plans and priorities and the development of all countries, in particular the developing countries,

*Recognizing* that the Commission on Human Settlements has continued to address itself effectively to substantive issues in the field of human settlements of priority concern to Member States, particularly developing countries,

*Taking note* of Economic and Social Council resolution 1981/69 A of 24 July 1981 on international co-operation in the field of human settlements,

*Having considered* the report of the Commission on Human Settlements on the work of its fourth session,<sup>20</sup>

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Commission on Human Settlements on the work of its fourth session;

2. *Welcomes* resolution 4/1, entitled "Manila Communiqué on a Human Settlements Movement", adopted on 6 May 1981 by the Commission on Human Settlements at its fourth session;<sup>21</sup>

3. *Urges* the Commission on Human Settlements to continue to take account of and to provide adequate support to technical co-operation among developing countries in the formulation and implementation of its programmes on human settlements.

*84th plenary meeting  
4 December 1981*

### B

#### RENEWABLE SOURCES OF ENERGY FOR HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolutions 33/148 of 20 December 1978, 34/190 of 18 December 1979 and 35/204 of 16 December 1980 on the convening of the United Nations Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy,

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. I.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, chaps. II and III.

<sup>20</sup> *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 8 (A/36/8).*

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, annex I.

Resolution No.	Title	Item	Date of adoption	Page
37/250	Immediate implementation of the Nairobi Programme of Action for the Development and Utilization of New and Renewable Sources of Energy (A/37/680/Add.11) ..	71 (n)	21 December 1982	165
37/251	Development of the energy resources of developing countries (A/37/680/Add.13) ..	71	21 December 1982	168
37/252	Immediate measures in favour of the developing countries (A/37/680/Add.13) ....	71	21 December 1982	169

### 37/132. Co-operation between the United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation

*The General Assembly,*

Recalling its resolution 33/18 of 10 November 1978, by which it accorded observer status to the Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation,

Recalling also its resolution 36/174 of 17 December 1981, in which it recognized the necessity of strengthening co-operation between the United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation,

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on co-operation between the United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation;<sup>2</sup>

2. Requests the Secretary-General, in collaboration with the Secretary-General of the Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation, to specify in detail the areas of co-operation envisaged in his report and to consider the modalities of this co-operation, taking duly into account the proposals of the Secretary-General of the Agency;

3. Also requests the Secretary-General to report on this subject to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session through the Economic and Social Council.

*109th plenary meeting  
17 December 1982*

### 37/133. Identification of the least developed among the developing countries

*The General Assembly,*

Recalling its resolutions 2768 (XXVI) of 18 November 1971, 3487 (XXX) of 12 December 1975 and 32/92 and 32/99 of 13 December 1977 and Economic and Social Council resolution 1981/34 of 8 May 1981, on the basis of which the current list of the least developed countries was established,

Recalling also its resolutions 36/204, 36/209 and 36/216 of 17 December 1981 and Economic and Social Council decision 1982/106 of 4 February 1982 and resolution 1982/41 of 27 July 1982,

Decides to include Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone and Togo in the list of the least developed countries, in accordance with the recommendation made by the Committee for Development Planning at its eighteenth session.<sup>3</sup>

*109th plenary meeting  
17 December 1982*

### 37/134. Assistance to the Palestinian people

*The General Assembly,*

Recalling its resolution ES-7/5 of 26 June 1982,

Recalling also Security Council resolution 512 (1982) of 19 June 1982,

Recalling further Economic and Social Council resolution 1982/48 of 27 July 1982,

Expressing its deep alarm at the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, which claimed the lives of a very large number of civilian Palestinians,

Horrified by the Sabra and Shatila massacre,

Noting with deep concern the dire need of the Palestinian victims of the Israeli invasion for urgent humanitarian assistance,

Noting the need to provide economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people,

1. Condemns Israel for its invasion of Lebanon, which inflicted severe damage on civilian Palestinians, including heavy loss of human life, intolerable suffering and massive material destruction;

2. Endorses Economic and Social Council resolution 1982/48;

3. Calls upon Governments and relevant United Nations bodies to provide humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian victims of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon;

4. Requests the relevant programmes, agencies, organs and organizations of the United Nations system to intensify their efforts, in co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization, to provide economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people;

5. Also requests that United Nations assistance to the Palestinians in the Arab host countries should be rendered in co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and with the consent of the Arab host Government concerned;

6. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

*109th plenary meeting  
17 December 1982*

### 37/135. Permanent sovereignty over national resources in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories

*The General Assembly,*

Recalling its resolutions 3175 (XXVIII) of 17 December 1973, 3336 (XXIX) of 17 December 1974, 3516 (XXX) of 15 December 1975, 31/186 of 21 December 1976, 32/161 of 19 December 1977, 34/136 of 14 December 1979, 35/110 of 5 December 1980 and 36/173 of 17 December 1981 on permanent sovereignty over national resources in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories,

Recalling also its previous resolutions on permanent sovereignty over natural resources, particularly their provisions supporting resolutely the efforts of the developing countries and the peoples of territories under colonial and racial domination and foreign occupation in their struggle to regain

<sup>2</sup> A/37/290.

<sup>3</sup> Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1982, Supplement No. 5 (E/1982/15 and Corr.1 and 2), para. 103.

6. *Also reaffirms* that all measures undertaken by Israel to exploit the human, natural and all other resources, wealth and economic activities in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories are illegal, and calls upon Israel to desist immediately from such measures;

7. *Further reaffirms* the right of the Palestinian and other Arab peoples subjected to Israeli aggression and occupation to the restitution of, and full compensation for the exploitation, depletion and loss of and damage to, their natural, human and all other resources, wealth and economic activities, and calls upon Israel to meet their just claims;

8. *Calls upon* all States to support the Palestinian and other Arab peoples in the exercise of their above-mentioned rights;

9. *Calls upon* all States, international organizations, specialized agencies, business corporations and all other institutions not to recognize, or co-operate with or assist in any manner in, any measures undertaken by Israel to exploit the national resources of the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories or to effect any changes in the demographic composition, the character and form of use of their natural resources or the institutional structure of those territories;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to elaborate on his report<sup>8</sup> in order to cover also, in detail, the resources exploited by the Israeli settlements and the Israeli-imposed regulations and policies hampering the economic development of the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories, including a comparison between the practices of Israel and its obligations under international law;

11. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to submit the detailed report to the General Assembly at its thirty-ninth session, through the Economic and Social Council.

102nd plenary meeting  
19 December 1983

### 38/145. Assistance to the Palestinian people

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 37/134 of 17 December 1982,

*Recalling also* Economic and Social Council resolution 1983/43 of 25 July 1983,

*Recalling further* the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights, adopted by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine,<sup>9</sup>

*Noting* the need to provide economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people,

1. *Endorses* Economic and Social Council resolution 1983/43;

2. *Endorses also* decision 83/11 of 24 June 1983 of the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme,<sup>10</sup> in which the Council called upon Governments and intergovernmental organizations to provide additional special contributions to the Programme amounting to at least 8 million dollars during the third programming cycle, so as to ensure the implementation of the United Nations Development Programme assistance programme for the Palestinian people;

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General:

(a) To convene in 1984 a meeting of the relevant programmes, organizations, agencies and organs of the

United Nations system to develop a co-ordinated programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people and to ensure its implementation;

(b) To provide for the participation in the meeting of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the Arab host countries and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations;

(c) To utilize existing inter-agency mechanisms to prepare proposals for assistance projects to be considered at the meeting;

4. *Requests* that the meeting should look into the most effective inter-agency machinery to co-ordinate and intensify United Nations assistance to the Palestinian people;

5. *Requests* the relevant programmes, organizations, agencies and organs of the United Nations system to intensify their efforts, in co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization, to provide economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people;

6. *Also requests* that United Nations assistance to the Palestinians in the Arab host countries should be rendered in co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and with the consent of the Arab host Government concerned;

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-ninth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

102nd plenary meeting  
19 December 1983

### 38/146. World Tourism Organization

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolutions 32/156 and 32/157 of 19 December 1977, 33/122 of 19 December 1978 and 34/134 of 14 December 1979, concerning the World Tourism Organization,

*Recalling also* its resolution 36/41 of 19 November 1981, which pertains, *inter alia*, to the Manila Declaration on World Tourism,<sup>11</sup>

*Recalling further* its resolution 35/56 of 5 December 1980, by which it proclaimed the Third United Nations Development Decade and adopted the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade,

*Taking note* of paragraph 5 of its resolution 36/41 and of subparagraph (c) of Economic and Social Council decision 109 (LIX) of 23 July 1975, in which the General Assembly and the Council decided that the World Tourism Organization might participate, on a continuing basis, in the work of the Assembly and the Council in areas of concern to that organization,

*Noting* that the World Tourism Meeting was convened from 21 to 27 August 1982 at Acapulco, Mexico, and that it adopted the Acapulco Document on World Tourism<sup>12</sup> as a follow-up to the Manila Declaration,

*Recognizing* the new dimension and role of tourism as a positive instrument towards the improvement of the quality of life for all peoples, as well as a significant force for peace and international understanding,

1. *Welcomes* the report of the Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization<sup>13</sup> on the progress made in

<sup>9</sup> Report of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, Geneva, 29 August–7 September 1983 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.83.I.21), chap. I, sect. B.

<sup>10</sup> See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1983, Supplement No. 9 (E/1983/20)*, annex I.

<sup>11</sup> A/36/236, annex, appendix I.

<sup>12</sup> A/38/182-E/1983/66, annex, appendix.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, annex.

bodies and organizations, in particular the World Health Organization;

4. *Notes with satisfaction* the important efforts made by the Executive Director of the Fund to respond to the present critical emergency situation of children and mothers in Africa and urges him to continue his efforts in this respect, as well as to continue to implement child survival and child development activities generally in Africa in accordance with the decisions of the Executive Board of the Fund;

5. *Reaffirms* the goals of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade with reference to children, in particular the goals of ensuring children's immunization against major diseases by 1990 and of reducing the infant mortality rate to less than 50 per 1,000 live births in all countries by the year 2000,<sup>185</sup> and notes the crucial role of the child survival and child development revolution in meeting those goals;

6. *Reaffirms* the role of the Fund as the lead agency in the United Nations system responsible for co-ordinating the follow-up activities of the International Year of the Child related to the goals and objectives concerning children set forth in the International Development Strategy;<sup>186</sup>

7. *Commends* the Executive Director of the Fund for his continuing efforts to enlarge the resources of the Fund so that it can respond effectively to the needs of the developing countries, in continued pursuance of its mandate;

8. *Expresses its appreciation* to Governments that have responded to the needs of the Fund and expresses the hope that more States will come forward with positive responses;

9. *Appeals* to all Governments to increase their contributions so that, in the light of the current economic situation, the Fund may be able to strengthen its co-operation with developing countries and respond to the urgent needs of children in those countries.

*104th plenary meeting  
18 December 1984*

### 39/223. Economic development projects in the occupied Palestinian territories

*The General Assembly,*

*Aware* of the Israeli restrictions imposed on the foreign trade of the occupied Palestinian territories,

*Aware also* of the imposed domination of the Palestinian market by Israel,

*Taking into account* the need to give Palestinian firms and products direct access to external markets without Israeli interference,

1. *Calls* for the urgent lifting of the Israeli restrictions imposed on the economy of the occupied Palestinian territories;

2. *Recognizes* the Palestinian interest in establishing a seaport in the occupied Gaza Strip to give Palestinian firms and products direct access to external markets;

3. *Calls upon* all concerned to facilitate the establishment of a seaport in the occupied Gaza Strip;

4. *Also calls upon* all concerned to facilitate the establishment of a cement plant in the occupied West Bank and a citrus plant in the occupied Gaza Strip;

<sup>185</sup> Resolution 35/56, annex, para. 48.

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 50.

<sup>187</sup> *Report of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, Geneva, 29 August-7 September 1983* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.83.I.21), chap. I, sect. B.

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fortieth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

*104th plenary meeting  
18 December 1984*

### 39/224. Assistance to the Palestinian people

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 38/145 of 19 December 1983,

*Recalling also* Economic and Social Council resolution 1984/56 of 25 July 1984,

*Recalling further* the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights, adopted by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine,<sup>187</sup>

*Noting* the need to provide economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on assistance to the Palestinian people;<sup>188</sup>

2. *Takes note also* of the report of the Secretary-General<sup>189</sup> concerning the meeting on assistance to the Palestinian people which was held at Geneva on 5 and 6 July 1984 in response to General Assembly resolution 38/145;

3. *Expresses its thanks* to the Secretary-General for convening the meeting on assistance to the Palestinian people;

4. *Regards* such a meeting as a valuable opportunity to assess progress in economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people and to explore ways and means of enhancing such assistance;

5. *Draws the attention* of the international community, the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to the need to disburse their aid to the occupied Palestinian territories only for the benefit of the Palestinian people and to ensure that it is not used in any manner to serve the interests of the Israeli occupation authorities;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General:

(a) To expedite the finalizing, through existing inter-agency mechanisms, of the co-ordinated programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people requested in General Assembly resolution 38/145;

(b) To convene in 1985 a meeting of the relevant programmes, organizations, agencies, funds and organs of the United Nations system to consider the co-ordinated programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people;

(c) To provide for the participation in the meeting of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the Arab host countries and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations;

7. *Requests* the relevant programmes, organizations, agencies, funds and organs of the United Nations system to intensify their efforts, in co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization, to provide economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people;

8. *Also requests* that United Nations assistance to the Palestinians in the Arab host countries should be rendered in co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and with the consent of the Arab host Government concerned;

<sup>188</sup> A/39/265-E/1984.77 and Add.1.

<sup>189</sup> A/39/474 and Corr.1

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fortieth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

*104th plenary meeting  
18 December 1984*

### 39/225. World Conference on Fisheries Management and Development

*The General Assembly,*

*Recognizing* that the recent developments in the law of the sea have created new opportunities and responsibilities for States and that national and international objectives and policies for fisheries management and development are being re-examined and adjusted,

*Recognizing also* the relevant provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea,<sup>190</sup>

*Bearing in mind* the importance of the need to promote improvements in the production and distribution of all food and agricultural products, including those from fisheries, and to raise levels of nutrition and standards of living,

*Noting with appreciation* the convening of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations World Conference on Fisheries Management and Development at Rome from 27 June to 6 July 1984, with a view to promoting the optimum utilization of world fishery resources from the economic, social and nutritional points of view, increasing the contribution of fisheries to national self-reliance in food production and towards food security, enhancing the capacity of developing countries in the management and development of fisheries and fostering international co-operation in fisheries between developed and developing countries and among developing countries themselves,

1. *Endorses* the Strategy for Fisheries Management and Development and the associated programmes of action adopted by the World Conference on Fisheries Management and Development;<sup>191</sup>

2. *Invites* States and international organizations concerned to take into account the principles and guidelines contained in the Strategy when planning the management and development of fisheries;

3. *Urges* all bilateral and multilateral donor agencies and financing institutions to provide the support required for the effective implementation of the programmes of action;

4. *Invites* the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, in collaboration with the organs, organizations and bodies concerned within the United Nations system, to continue to play its important role in assisting States in their efforts towards the improved management and development of fishery resources.

*104th plenary meeting  
18 December 1984*

<sup>190</sup> See *Official Records of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea*, vol. XVII (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.84.V.3), document A/CONF.62/122.

<sup>191</sup> See Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *Report of the FAO World Conference on Fisheries Management and Development, Rome, 27 June-6 July 1984* (Rome, 1984), pp. 12-30 and 36-52; transmitted to the members of the General Assembly by a note by the Secretariat (A/C.2/39/6).

### 39/226. Confidence-building in international economic relations

*The General Assembly,*

*Taking note* of the report of the Secretary-General<sup>192</sup> prepared in response to its resolution 38/196 of 20 December 1983 on confidence-building in international economic relations,

*Recalling* that the spirit of mutual confidence made possible the founding of the United Nations nearly forty years ago,

*Convinced* that the state of, and trends prevailing in, the world economy, as well as the deteriorating international climate, call for new efforts aimed at enhancing confidence in international economic relations,

*Convinced also* that there can be no sustained global development unless there is an improvement in the economic situation of the developing countries, which depends, *inter alia*, on structural adjustments in the international financial and trading system and on the reinforcement of confidence among all States in their economic relations,

*Reiterating its concern* over the impact of political tensions on international economic co-operation and over the increasing departure from the multilateral platform of economic exchanges and negotiations on key development issues,

1. *Invites* all States and the United Nations bodies and organizations concerned to continue the exchange of views on confidence-building in international economic relations and on ways and means of enhancing such confidence;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue his consultations with Governments and the United Nations bodies and organizations concerned on the scope of possible confidence-building measures in international economic relations and on the role of the United Nations in that endeavour, and to present his analysis and conclusions thereon to the General Assembly at its forty-first session, through the Economic and Social Council.

*104th plenary meeting  
18 December 1984*

### 39/227. Transport and Communications Decade for Asia and the Pacific

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* the relevant paragraphs of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade, annexed to General Assembly resolution 35/56 of 5 December 1980,

*Recalling also* Economic and Social Council resolutions 1983/69 of 29 July 1983 and 1984/78 of 27 July 1984,

*Taking note* of resolution 236 (XL) of 27 April 1984 of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,<sup>193</sup> concerning a transport and communications decade for Asia and the Pacific during the period 1985-1994,

*Recalling* the section of the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s for the Least Developed Countries relevant to the improvement of transport and communications infrastructure,<sup>194</sup>

<sup>192</sup> A/39/312-E/1984/106 and Corr.1 and Add.1 and 2.

<sup>193</sup> See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1984, Supplement No. 14 (E/1984/24)*, chap. IV.

<sup>194</sup> See *Report of the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, Paris, 1-14 September 1981* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.82.1.8), part one, sect. A.

**40/169. Economic development projects in the occupied Palestinian territories**

*The General Assembly,*

*Aware of the Israeli restrictions imposed on the foreign trade of the occupied Palestinian territories,*

*Aware also of the imposed domination of the Palestinian market by Israel,*

*Taking into account the need to give Palestinian firms and products direct access to external markets without Israeli interference,*

*Noting with regret the lack of progress in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 39/223 of 18 December 1984, as reflected in the report of the Secretary-General on economic development projects in the occupied Palestinian territories,<sup>2</sup>*

1. *Calls for the urgent lifting of the Israeli restrictions imposed on the economy of the occupied Palestinian territories;*

2. *Recognizes the Palestinian interest in establishing a seaport in the occupied Gaza Strip to give Palestinian firms and products direct access to external markets;*

3. *Calls upon all concerned to facilitate the establishment of a seaport in the occupied Gaza Strip;*

4. *Also calls upon all concerned to facilitate the establishment of a cement plant in the occupied West Bank and a citrus plant in the occupied Gaza Strip;*

5. *Requests the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to facilitate the establishment of the above-mentioned projects and to report to the General Assembly at its forty-first session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.*

*119th plenary meeting  
17 December 1985*

**40/170. Assistance to the Palestinian people**

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling its resolution 39/224 of 18 December 1984,*

*Recalling also Economic and Social Council resolution 1985/57 of 25 July 1985,*

*Recalling further the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights, adopted by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine,<sup>3</sup>*

*Noting the need to provide economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people,*

1. *Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on assistance to the Palestinian people;<sup>4</sup>*

2. *Notes the meeting on assistance to the Palestinian people that was held at Geneva on 5 and 8 July 1985 in response to General Assembly resolution 39/224;*

3. *Expresses its thanks to the Secretary-General for convening the meeting on assistance to the Palestinian people;*

4. *Regards such a meeting as a valuable opportunity to assess progress in economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people and to explore ways and means of enhancing such assistance;*

5. *Draws the attention of the international community, the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to the need to disburse*

<sup>2</sup> A/40/367-E/1985/116.

<sup>3</sup> *Report of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, Geneva, 29 August-7 September 1983* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.83.I.21), chap. I, sect. B.

<sup>4</sup> A/40/353-E/1985/115 and Corr.1 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1.

their aid to the occupied Palestinian territories only for the benefit of the Palestinian people;

6. *Requests the Secretary-General:*

(a) *To review the progress made in the implementation of the proposed activities and projects described in his report on assistance to the Palestinian people;*

(b) *To take all necessary steps to finalize the programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people requested in General Assembly resolution 38/145 of 19 December 1983;*

(c) *To convene in 1986 a meeting of the relevant programmes, organizations, agencies, funds and organs of the United Nations system to consider economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people;*

(d) *To provide for the participation in the meeting of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the Arab host countries and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations;*

7. *Requests the relevant programmes, organizations, agencies, funds and organs of the United Nations system to intensify their efforts, in co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization, to provide economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people;*

8. *Also requests that United Nations assistance to the Palestinians in the Arab host countries should be rendered in co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and with the consent of the Arab host Government concerned;*

9. *Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-first session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.*

*119th plenary meeting  
17 December 1985*

**40/171. International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade**

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling its resolution 32/158 of 19 December 1977, in which it approved the Mar del Plata Action Plan adopted by the United Nations Water Conference,<sup>5</sup>*

*Recalling also its resolution 35/18 of 10 November 1980, by which it proclaimed the period 1981-1990 as the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade,*

*Recalling further Economic and Social Council resolution 1983/57 of 28 July 1983, in which the Council urged Governments of developing countries to adopt national targets for drinking water supply and sanitation services, commensurate with resource availability, absorptive capacity and ability, and to formulate action plans and programmes for reaching the targets set,*

*Mindful of the fact that significant progress towards meeting the objectives of the Decade by 1990 will require a much greater sense of urgency and priority on the part of Governments and the continued support of the international community,*

1. *Welcomes the recommendations and conclusions contained in the report of the Secretary-General on progress in the attainment of the goals of the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade;<sup>6</sup>*

<sup>5</sup> See *Report of the United Nations Water Conference, Mar del Plata, 14-25 March 1977* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.77.II.A.12), chap. I.

<sup>6</sup> A/40/108-E/1985/49.

dorsed the conclusions of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination at its twenty-sixth session, concerning the United Nations special responsibility for carrying out research on global and sectoral issues, and their interrelationship, in order to assist Member States and the deliberations of the competent intergovernmental bodies,

*Believing* in the usefulness of integrating economic and social components in the formulation of policies and programmes at the national and international levels for the benefit of social and economic progress and human well-being,

*Stressing* that the eradication of hunger and malnutrition and the solution of other economic and social problems on the basis of industrial, agricultural and rural development are among the objectives of the Third United Nations Development Decade,

*Recalling* the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990, adopted by the General Assembly at its thirteenth special session,<sup>30</sup>

*Reaffirming* that each State has the sovereign and inalienable right to choose its economic and social system in accordance with the will of its people and without outside interference,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on a unified approach to development analysis and planning, in particular the observations and conclusions contained therein;<sup>31</sup>

2. *Considers* that an integrated approach to development analysis and planning, which takes into account differing economic, social and political features of national economies, is one of the tools for the attainment of sustained social, economic and human development;

3. *Invites* States to support the efforts of developing countries, if they so request, to strengthen their management capacity to apply a unified approach to development analysis and comprehensive macro-economic strategies and planning, especially with regard to integrating food and agricultural production in all sectors and supporting industrialization, economic and social infrastructure and human resources development;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take into account a unified approach to development analysis and planning when preparing economic and social studies, ongoing research, projections and reports, including the *World Economic Survey* and the *Report on the World Social Situation*, as well as the appraisal of the implementation of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade;

5. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to continue to make available to States the experience gained in the use of a unified approach to development analysis and planning, taking into account the fact that new ideas relating to the promotion of social and economic development are emerging.

98th plenary meeting  
5 December 1986

#### 41/175. University for Peace

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolutions 33/109 of 18 December 1978, 34/111 of 14 December 1979 and 35/55 of 5 December 1980,

*Taking note* of Economic and Social Council resolutions 1985/2 of 24 May 1985 and 1986/6 of 21 May 1986,

*Endorses* Economic and Social Council resolution 1986/6.

98th plenary meeting  
5 December 1986

#### 41/180. Net transfer of resources from developing to developed countries

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* Economic and Social Council resolution 1986/56 of 22 July 1986,

*Profoundly concerned* at the net transfer of resources from developing to developed countries, which is taking place at alarming levels and accelerating rates and which is adversely affecting the development efforts of developing countries and the living conditions of their people,

1. *Reaffirms* the urgent need to take appropriate and effective measures in the fields of money, finance, debt, resource flows, trade and development, in order to halt and reverse the net transfer of resources from developing to developed countries;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in preparing the report called for in Economic and Social Council resolution 1986/56, also to take duly into account the interrelationship between the issues of money, finance, debt, resource flows, trade and development.

100th plenary meeting  
8 December 1986

#### 41/181. Assistance to the Palestinian people

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 40/170 of 17 December 1985,

*Recalling also* Economic and Social Council resolution 1986/49 of 22 July 1986,

*Recalling further* the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights, adopted by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine,<sup>32</sup>

*Noting* that the programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people requested in General Assembly resolution 38/145 of 19 December 1983 has not been prepared,

*Noting* the increasing need to provide economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on assistance to the Palestinian people;<sup>33</sup>

2. *Welcomes* the decision of the Secretary-General to send a mission to prepare the programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people requested in General Assembly resolution 38/145;

<sup>32</sup> *Report of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, Geneva, 29 August-7 September 1983* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.83.I.21), chap. I, sect. B.

<sup>33</sup> A/41/319 and Corr.1 and Add.1 and 2.

<sup>30</sup> Resolution S-13/2, annex.

<sup>31</sup> A/41/323-E/1986/77 and Corr.1 and Add.1.



3. *Notes* the meeting on assistance to the Palestinian people held at Geneva on 2 July 1986 in response to General Assembly resolution 40/170;

4. *Expresses its thanks* to the Secretary-General for convening the meeting on assistance to the Palestinian people;

5. *Regards* such a meeting as a valuable opportunity to assess progress in economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people and to explore ways and means of enhancing such assistance;

6. *Urges* the international community, the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to disburse their aid or any other form of assistance to the occupied Palestinian territories only for the benefit of the Palestinian people and in a manner that will not serve to prolong the Israeli occupation;

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General:

(a) To convene in 1987 a meeting of the relevant programmes, organizations, agencies, funds and bodies of the United Nations system to consider economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people;

(b) To invite the Palestine Liberation Organization, the Arab host countries and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to participate in the meeting;

8. *Requests* the international community, the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to sustain and increase their assistance to the Palestinian people in co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization;

9. *Also requests* that United Nations assistance to the Palestinians in the Arab host countries should be rendered in co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and with the consent of the Arab host Government concerned;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-second session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

*100th plenary meeting  
8 December 1986*

#### **41/182. Indigenous entrepreneurs in economic development**

*The General Assembly,*

*Reaffirming* the right of each country, in accordance with its chosen economic and social system and priorities, to determine its objectives, to endeavour to fulfil its development plans, to strengthen the public and private sectors of its economy and to promote the development of its human resources,

*Recognizing* the responsibility of the international community, in particular of the developed countries, to promote and endeavour to provide an equitable international economic environment, supportive of the development of developing countries, in the light of the goals and objectives of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade,<sup>34</sup>

*Recognizing also* the role and responsibility of each Government to promote development and provide an environment conducive to it,

*Reaffirming* its resolution 34/137 of 14 December 1979 on the role of the public sector in promoting the economic development of developing countries, as well as Economic and Social Council resolutions 1985/10 of 28 May 1985 on public administration and finance for development and 1986/73 of 23 July 1986 on the development of human resources,

*Noting* that indigenous entrepreneurs can play a crucial and positive role in mobilizing resources and promoting economic growth and socio-economic development,

*Aware* that many countries are actively seeking to encourage, strengthen and improve the effectiveness of indigenous entrepreneurs in expanding and modernizing productive capacities, particularly by increasing productivity and technological capabilities, and in contributing generally to the development process,

*Bearing in mind* that the promotion and development of indigenous entrepreneurs requires a dynamic capital formation process in developing countries, which is also related to financial and technical resources and to broader market opportunities available to these countries,

*Recognizing* that people are the mainspring and inspiration of social and economic progress,

1. *Invites* the Secretary-General and relevant organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, such as the regional commissions, the United Nations Development Programme, the International Labour Organisation, the International Trade Centre UNCTAD/GATT, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the World Bank, as well as regional development banks, within their existing mandates, programmes and priorities:

(a) To continue to support, through, *inter alia*, technical co-operation projects, the efforts of States in encouraging indigenous entrepreneurs in the private, public and/or other sectors in accordance with national laws, priorities and regulations;

(b) To facilitate the practical exchange of information and experience among all countries on the role of indigenous entrepreneurs in economic development;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to study measures at the national and international levels to promote the contribution of indigenous entrepreneurs in both private and public sectors to the economic development of developing countries, drawing upon the work already in progress in the United Nations system and bearing in mind the need to avoid duplication of effort and cost, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its forty-third session through the Economic and Social Council.

*100th plenary meeting  
8 December 1986*

#### **41/183. United Nations Financing System for Science and Technology for Development**

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 34/218 of 19 December 1979 on the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development,

*Affirming* resolution 6 (VIII) of 6 June 1986 of the Intergovernmental Committee on Science and Technology for Development<sup>35</sup> and decision 86/38 of 27 June 1986 of the

<sup>34</sup> Resolution 35/56, annex.

<sup>35</sup> Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-first Session, Supplement No. 37 (A/41/37), sect. II.A.

purposes set out in the Charter, in particular in Article 55, to create conditions of stability, well-being and economic and social progress, and to promote the development of developing countries,

*Recognizing* that the increasing complexity of the inter-related issues of money, finance, external debt, trade, commodities and development calls for a universal, more comprehensive and continuing dialogue to address these issues on the basis of common interest, equality, non-discrimination and collective responsibility and to the mutual benefit of all countries,

*Aware* that both national and international policies should be growth-oriented and mutually reinforcing in order to make interdependence, in contrast to the experience of the recent past, a vehicle for transmitting and cumulating positive impulses and benefits for all countries, with special emphasis on the development needs of developing countries,

*Reiterating* that the alleviation of the most urgent economic problems of developing countries is a major factor in ensuring international economic stability and a better political climate,

*Calling* for the reinforcement of multilateral co-operation in promoting a common understanding and determining practical approaches and measures to deal with problems of growth, development, in particular of developing countries, and other international economic issues,

*Recognizing* that the strengthening of co-operation within the United Nations system, including its operational activities, would help to create a more predictable and more supportive international economic environment and increase confidence in international economic relations designed to bring about a healthy, secure and equitable future for the world economy,

*Reaffirming* that regional and subregional economic integration could in appropriate cases serve as an essential element in strengthening economic and technical co-operation, in particular in the sphere of science and technology for development, as it contributes to a more predictable international economic environment,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on a concept of international economic security;<sup>3</sup>

2. *Emphasizes* that the Charter of the United Nations provides a basis for conducting relations among States in a manner that would promote the shared objective of revitalizing development, growth and international trade in a more predictable and supportive environment through multilateral co-operation and thus also promote peace, security and stability;

3. *Expresses its conviction* that the search for international economic security should be based on a constructive, universal, more comprehensive and continued dialogue within the United Nations and the United Nations system aimed at developing practical approaches and measures that contribute to improvements in the international economic system through reform and strengthening of the framework of principles and rules governing trade, monetary and financial relations within which countries operate;

4. *Recognizes* that the United Nations should make a greater contribution to the efforts of Governments to improve their capacity to manage the interrelationships among different economies and the linkages between various sectors and issues;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in monitoring the development of international and multilateral economic co-operation, to continue his efforts to enhance the

capacity of the United Nations to focus on current and potential problem areas in the world economy in order to assist Governments in taking concerted measures, in particular to solve development problems of developing countries;

6. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to consult with eminent persons representing all regions on principles of international economic security in the light of the present resolution, keeping in mind the existing mandates on development and international economic co-operation, and to submit the findings thereon to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session through the Economic and Social Council.

96th plenary meeting  
11 December 1987

#### 42/166. Assistance to the Palestinian people

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 41/181 of 8 December 1986,

*Taking note* of Economic and Social Council resolution 1987/77 of 8 July 1987,

*Recalling* the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights, adopted by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine,<sup>5</sup>

*Aware* of the need to provide economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Noting* the meeting on assistance to the Palestinian people, held at Geneva on 19 June 1987 in response to resolution 41/181,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General on assistance to the Palestinian people;<sup>6</sup>

2. *Welcomes* the preparation of the programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people set out in the report of the Secretary-General;<sup>7</sup>

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General to develop the programme and seek its early implementation in close co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and to co-ordinate the activities envisaged by various organizations of the United Nations system within the framework of the programme;

4. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to mobilize resources for the programme in close co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization;

5. *Urges* the international community, the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to disburse their aid or any other forms of assistance to the occupied Palestinian territories solely for the benefit of the Palestinian people and in a manner that will not serve to prolong the Israeli occupation;

6. *Requests* the international community, the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to sustain and increase their assistance to the Palestinian people in co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization;

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-third session, through the

<sup>5</sup> *Report of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, Geneva, 29 August-7 September 1983* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.83.I.21), chap. I, sect. B.

<sup>6</sup> A/42/289-E/1987/86 and Add.1 and 2 and Add.2/Corr.1.

<sup>7</sup> A/42/289-E/1987/86, annex.

Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

*96th plenary meeting  
11 December 1987*

#### 42/167. World Tourism Organization

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolutions 32/156 and 32/157 of 19 December 1977, 33/122 of 19 December 1978 and 34/134 of 14 December 1979 concerning the World Tourism Organization, and, in particular, resolution 40/172 of 17 December 1985 in which it requested the Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization to submit to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the progress made in the implementation of the Manila Declaration<sup>8</sup> and the Acapulco Document<sup>9</sup> on World Tourism,

*Taking note* of the report of the Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization,<sup>10</sup>

*Requests* the Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the further implementation of resolution 40/172.

*96th plenary meeting  
11 December 1987*

#### 42/168. Fortieth anniversary of the World Health Organization

*The General Assembly,*

*Taking note* of Economic and Social Council resolution 1987/76 of 8 July 1987,

*Noting* that the World Health Organization intends to celebrate its fortieth anniversary during 1988 in accordance with World Health Assembly resolution WHA40.36, of 15 May 1987,<sup>11</sup>

*Noting also* that the World Health Organization will use the occasion of its fortieth anniversary as a global opportunity to inform and mobilize all concerned with a view to achieving the goal of health for all by the year 2000 in an atmosphere of goodwill, consensus and mutual respect,

*Expressing its appreciation* for the important achievements of the World Health Organization in fulfilling its constitutional mandate to direct and co-ordinate international health work,

*Decides* to observe, at its forty-third session, the fortieth anniversary of the World Health Organization in a manner befitting its achievements and future role in international health.

*96th plenary meeting  
11 December 1987*

#### 42/169. International decade for natural disaster reduction

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 3345 (XXIX) of 17 December 1974, in which it requested the Secretary-General to take appropriate measures to provide facilities for co-ordinated multidisciplinary research also at the regional level aimed at synthesizing, integrating and advancing existing knowledge on the interrelationships between population, resources, environment and development, in order to assist Member States, particularly the developing countries, and the organizations of the United Nations system in their efforts to cope with the complex and multidimensional problems related to this field in the context of social and economic development,

*Noting with appreciation* the important contribution made by the World Commission on Environment and Development, as reflected in its report,<sup>12</sup> which calls for new national and international approaches in dealing with the various factors affecting the environment, including natural disasters,

*Considering* that natural disasters, such as earthquakes, windstorms (cyclones, hurricanes, tornadoes, typhoons), tsunamis, floods, landslides, volcanic eruptions, wildfires and other calamities of natural origin, have claimed about 3 million lives worldwide in the past two decades, adversely affected the lives of at least 800 million more people and resulted in immediate damages exceeding \$23 billion,

*Considering also* that, among disasters of natural origin, drought and desertification are resulting in enormous damage, particularly in Africa, where the recent drought threatened the lives of more than 20 million people and uprooted millions of others,

*Recognizing* that the effects of such disasters may damage very severely the fragile economic infrastructure of developing countries, especially the least developed, landlocked and island developing countries, and thus hamper their development process,

*Recalling* the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization, particularly the section concerning natural disasters and the merits of proposals that have been made to stimulate international study, planning and preparations on this subject over the next decade under the auspices of the United Nations,<sup>13</sup>

*Also taking note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General concerning the existing mechanisms and arrangements within the United Nations system for disaster and emergency assistance and co-ordination,<sup>14</sup>

*Recognizing* the responsibility of the United Nations system for promoting international co-operation in the study of natural disasters of geophysical origin and in the development of techniques to mitigate risks arising therefrom, as well as for co-ordinating disaster relief, preparedness and prevention, including prediction and early warning,

*Convinced* that concerted international action for the reduction of natural disasters over the course of the 1990s would give genuine impetus to a series of concrete measures at the national, regional and international levels,

*Recognizing* that the primary responsibility for defining the general goals and directions of efforts undertaken in

<sup>8</sup> A/36/236, annex, appendix I.

<sup>9</sup> A/38/182-E/1983/66, annex, appendix.

<sup>10</sup> A/42/227-E/1987/65.

<sup>11</sup> See *World Health Organization, Fortieth World Health Assembly, Geneva, 4-15 May 1987. Resolutions and Decisions, Annexes (WHA40/1987/REC/1)*.

<sup>12</sup> See A/42/427, annex.

<sup>13</sup> See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-second Session, Supplement No. 1 (A/42/1)*, sect. II.

<sup>14</sup> A/42/657.

Environment Programme,<sup>7</sup> should be accorded high priority by the relevant organs and programmes of the United Nations system;

5. *Endorses* the action of the World Meteorological Organization and the United Nations Environment Programme in jointly establishing an Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to provide internationally co-ordinated scientific assessments of the magnitude, timing and potential environmental and socio-economic impact of climate change and realistic response strategies, and expresses appreciation for the work already initiated by the Panel;

6. *Urges* Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and scientific institutions to treat climate change as a priority issue, to undertake and promote specific, co-operative action-oriented programmes and research so as to increase understanding on all sources and causes of climate change, including its regional aspects and specific time-frames as well as the cause and effect relationship of human activities and climate, and to contribute, as appropriate, with human and financial resources to efforts to protect the global climate;

7. *Calls upon* all relevant organizations and programmes of the United Nations system to support the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change;

8. *Encourages* the convening of conferences on climate change, particularly on global warming, at the national, regional and global levels in order to make the international community better aware of the importance of dealing effectively and in a timely manner with all aspects of climate change resulting from certain human activities;

9. *Calls upon* Governments and intergovernmental organizations to collaborate in making every effort to prevent detrimental effects on climate and activities which affect the ecological balance, and also calls upon non-governmental organizations, industry and other productive sectors to play their due role;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization and the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, utilizing the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, immediately to initiate action leading, as soon as possible, to a comprehensive review and recommendations with respect to:

(a) The state of knowledge of the science of climate and climatic change;

(b) Programmes and studies on the social and economic impact of climate change, including global warming;

(c) Possible response strategies to delay, limit or mitigate the impact of adverse climate change;

(d) The identification and possible strengthening of relevant existing international legal instruments having a bearing on climate;

(e) Elements for inclusion in a possible future international convention on climate;

11. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to bring the present resolution to the attention of all Governments, as well as intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and well-established scientific institutions with expertise in matters concerning climate;

12. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session on the implementation of the present resolution;

13. *Decides* to include this question in the provisional agenda of its forty-fourth session, without prejudice to the application of the principle of biennialization.

70th plenary meeting  
6 December 1988

#### 43/178. Assistance to the Palestinian people

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 42/166 of 11 December 1987,

*Taking note* of Economic and Social Council resolution 1988/54 of 26 July 1988,

*Bearing in mind* the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples,<sup>8</sup>

*Recalling* the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights, adopted by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine,<sup>9</sup>

*Taking into account* the *intifadah* of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, against the Israeli occupation including its economic and social policies and practices,

*Affirming* that the Palestinian people cannot develop their national economy as long as the Israeli occupation persists,

*Taking into consideration* the recent steps taken by Jordan concerning the occupied Palestinian West Bank,

*Aware* of the increasing need to provide economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on assistance to the Palestinian people;<sup>10</sup>

2. *Regrets* that the programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people has not been developed as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 42/166;

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General to charge the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) with supervising the development of the programme and to provide it with the funds needed to engage twenty experts to prepare an adequate programme, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization, taking into account the *intifadah* of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and its implications;

4. *Expresses its appreciation* to those States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations that have provided assistance to the Palestinian people;

5. *Urges* Member States, organizations of the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to disburse their aid or any other forms of assistance to the occupied Palestinian territory solely for the benefit of the Palestinian people and in a manner that will not serve to prolong the Israeli occupation;

6. *Calls* for the provision of emergency assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian terri-

<sup>8</sup> Resolution 1514 (XV).

<sup>9</sup> *Report of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, Geneva, 29 August-7 September 1983* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.83.I.21), chap. I, sect. B.

<sup>10</sup> A/43/367-E/1988/82 and Corr.1 and 2.

<sup>7</sup> See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 25 (A/43/25)*, annex, decision SS.I/3.

tory, including the dispatch of teams of orthopaedic surgeons;

7. *Requests* Member States, organizations of the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to sustain and increase their assistance to the Palestinian people, in close co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization;

8. *Requests* all Member States and donors that provide any form of assistance to the occupied Palestinian West Bank to sustain and increase that assistance and to channel it to the Palestinian people through their representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization;

9. *Decides* to extend to the occupied Palestinian territory the same preferential treatment accorded the least developed countries, pending the elimination of the Israeli occupation and the assumption of full control by the Palestinian people over their national economy without external interference;

10. *Calls* for treatment on a transit basis of Palestinian exports and imports passing through neighbouring ports and points of exit and entry;

11. *Also calls* for the granting of trade concessions and concrete preferential measures for Palestinian exports on the basis of certificates of origin issued by Palestinian bodies designated by the Palestine Liberation Organization;

12. *Further calls* for the implementation of development projects in the occupied Palestinian territory, including the projects mentioned in its resolution 39/223 of 18 December 1984;

13. *Condemns* the occupying Power, Israel, for its brutal economic and social policies and practices against the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory;

14. *Requests* United Nations bodies not to extend any form of assistance to the occupying Power, Israel;

15. *Stresses* that aid is not and cannot be a substitute for a genuine and just solution to the question of Palestine;

16. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

83rd plenary meeting  
20 December 1988

#### 43/179. Second Transport and Communications Decade in Africa

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 32/160 of 19 December 1977,

*Recalling also* Economic and Social Council resolution 2097 (LXIII) of 29 July 1977,

*Emphasizing* the need for full implementation of the goals and objectives of the Transport and Communications Decade in Africa, especially in the light of continuing inadequacies in the field of transport and communications in Africa,

1. *Endorses* Economic and Social Council resolution 1988/67 of 28 July 1988;

2. *Declares* the period 1991-2000 the Second Transport and Communications Decade in Africa;

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Organization of African Unity and existing African regional and subregional economic groups, as well as relevant United Nations agencies, to undertake the necessary preparatory arrangements for the Second Transport and Communications Decade in Africa, and to submit to

the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, a progress report at its forty-fourth session and a final report at its forty-fifth session.

83rd plenary meeting  
20 December 1988

#### 43/180. International Year of Shelter for the Homeless

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 37/221 of 20 December 1982, by which it proclaimed the year 1987 International Year of Shelter for the Homeless,

*Recalling also*, in particular, the objectives of the Year as contained in resolution 37/221,

*Having considered* the report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) entitled "International Year of Shelter for the Homeless: activities and achievements",<sup>11</sup> and the comments of the Commission on Human Settlements and of the Economic and Social Council on that report,

1. *Welcomes* the success achieved in attaining the objectives of the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless;

2. *Takes note with appreciation* of the numerous and encouraging reports, which had been received from a total of one hundred and thirty countries as at 31 December 1987, on activities, policies, programmes and projects undertaken by those countries within the context of the Year and towards the successful attainment of its objectives;

3. *Commends* Governments, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations for the efforts and resources that were effectively mobilized for the programme of activities for the Year;

4. *Requests* Governments to sustain the momentum generated by the programme for the Year and to continue implementing concrete and innovative programmes aimed at improving the shelter and neighbourhoods of the poor and the disadvantaged;

5. *Requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) to continue to assist Governments in their efforts towards that goal, within the framework of the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000,<sup>12</sup>

6. *Recommends* that Governments indicate, if possible on World Habitat Day, the concrete actions to be taken and the specific targets to be achieved during each successive year;

7. *Also recommends* that Governments maintain, where appropriate, the national focal points and national committees for the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless for the purpose of monitoring and assessing the progress achieved in improving the shelter and neighbourhoods of the poor and the disadvantaged;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to inform the General Assembly periodically, through the Economic and Social Council, on progress achieved in improving the shelter and neighbourhoods of the poor and the disadvantaged.

83rd plenary meeting  
20 December 1988

<sup>11</sup> HS/C/11/2.

<sup>12</sup> *Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 8, addendum (A/43/8/Add.1).*

tributions, in HIV/AIDS prevention and control efforts at the local, national and international levels;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to invite the Director-General of the World Health Organization to report to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution.

*85th plenary meeting  
22 December 1989*

**44/234. Patterns of consumption and qualitative indicators of development**

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 40/179 of 17 December 1985, Economic and Social Council resolution 1987/6 of 26 May 1987 and the reports of the Statistical Commission on its twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth sessions, in particular the sections on development indicators,<sup>130</sup> and *taking note* of Council resolution 1989/4 of 22 May 1989,

*Reiterating* that the subject of patterns of consumption and related socio-economic indicators is of considerable importance and high priority for developing countries,

*Reaffirming* that, in order for the international development strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade to be successful, there must be a range of indicators relating to economic and social progress, the application of concerted objectives and early-warning systems, with due regard for the economic, technological, social and environmental aspects of development,

1. *Endorses* Economic and Social Council resolution 1989/4, and requests the Statistical Office of the Secretariat and the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development to pursue actively their co-operation with the other relevant bodies of the United Nations system, with a view to achieving the objectives set out in paragraphs 2 and 3 of Council resolution 1989/4;

2. *Recognizes* that the identification of indicative patterns of consumption and the development of qualitative indicators of development would be extremely useful in the evaluation of the progress achieved in the implementation of the international development strategy and would make a substantial contribution to the work of a United Nations conference on environment and development;

3. *Invites* interested donor countries, the relevant international organizations and other bodies and institutions wishing to participate in the research work on patterns of consumption and qualitative indicators of development to make voluntary contributions for that purpose to the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development with a view to the holding in good time of the preparatory meeting and the international conference of high-level experts referred to in paragraphs 8 and 9 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1989/4;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to invite the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development to submit a preliminary progress report to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session on the implementation of

the present resolution and of Economic and Social Council resolution 1989/4.

*85th plenary meeting  
22 December 1989*

**44/235. Assistance to the Palestinian people**

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 43/178 of 20 December 1988,

*Taking note* of Economic and Social Council resolution 1989/96 of 26 July 1989,

*Taking into account* the *intifadah* of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory against the Israeli occupation, including Israeli economic and social policies and practices,

*Rejecting* Israeli restrictions on external economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory,

*Aware* of the increasing need to provide economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Affirming* that the Palestinian people cannot develop their national economy as long as the Israeli occupation persists,

1. *Takes note* of the report annexed to the note by the Secretary-General on assistance to the Palestinian people;<sup>131</sup>

2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations that have provided assistance to the Palestinian people;

3. *Requests* the international community, the organizations of the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to sustain and increase their assistance to the Palestinian people, in close co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization;

4. *Calls* for the treatment on a transit basis of Palestinian exports and imports passing through neighbouring ports and points of exit and entry;

5. *Also calls* for the granting of trade concessions and concrete preferential measures for Palestinian exports on the basis of Palestinian certificates of origin;

6. *Further calls* for the immediate lifting of Israeli restrictions and obstacles hindering the implementation of assistance projects by the United Nations Development Programme, other United Nations bodies and others providing economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory;

7. *Reiterates its call* for the implementation of development projects in the occupied Palestinian territory, including the projects mentioned in its resolution 39/223 of 18 December 1984;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

*85th plenary meeting  
22 December 1989*

<sup>130</sup> *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1987, Supplement No. 6 (E/1987/19), paras. 133-140, and ibid., 1989, Supplement No. 3 (E/1989/21), paras. 128-141.*

<sup>131</sup> A/44/637.

and the need to adopt sound financial practices and appropriate technologies;

4. *Urges* Governments, in their efforts to implement the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General and in the New Delhi Statement, to stress the following important objectives:

(a) To assign greater priority to the allocation of development financing to water supply and sanitation by seeking a better integration of the sector within the overall development planning process and to allocate a greater proportion of resources to low-income urban and rural areas, while addressing the deteriorating economic, social and environmental conditions in those areas;

(b) To implement programmes aimed at expanding service coverage within the framework of integrated water resources and environmental planning and management, in the context of sustainable national social and economic plans and urban and rural development policies, and to orient them towards services that reflect community needs and are used by beneficiaries;

(c) To ensure appropriate utilization of existing financial resources and mobilize additional funds from Governments, donors and non-governmental organizations, and to draw on the resources of the local communities;

(d) To assess and undertake institutional reforms to promote an integrated approach, including changes in procedure, attitude and behaviour, and the full participation of women at all levels in sector institutions;

(e) To assess the current status of institutions with a view to strengthening national capacities to plan and manage water supply and environmental sanitation programmes and to enable them to improve operational and financial efficiency;

(f) To increase their efforts to improve the efficiency and use of available financial resources by, *inter alia*, continuing to expand the use of cost-effective appropriate technologies, and to intensify South-South co-operation in that regard;

5. *Calls upon* the United Nations system and other relevant organizations to increase their financial and technical support to the national endeavours of developing countries in that regard;

6. *Urges* donor Governments, multilateral financial and development institutions and non-governmental organizations to give favourable consideration to requests for grants and concessional financing arrangements to support water supply and sanitation programmes in developing countries;

7. *Emphasizes* the importance of intensifying the co-ordination of national activities undertaken with the assistance of all relevant agencies in the field of water supply and sanitation through, in particular, the inter-agency Steering Committee for Co-operative Action for the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade and the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council;

8. *Decides* to review, at its fiftieth session, the progress made during the first half of the 1990s, and requests the Secretary-General to submit a report, through the Economic and Social Council, on further progress made in attaining the ultimate goal of providing a safe water supply and sanitation for all, including

proposals for the action needed for the remainder of the Decade, with special emphasis on the efforts made at the national level and on international co-operation.

*71st plenary meeting  
21 December 1990*

**45/182. Special high-level meeting of the Economic and Social Council with ministerial participation**

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution S-18/3 of 1 May 1990, the annex to which contains the Declaration on International Economic Co-operation, in particular the Revitalization of Economic Growth and Development of the Developing Countries,

*Taking into account* Economic and Social Council decision 1990/205 of 9 February 1990 on the implementation of Council resolutions 1988/77 of 29 July 1988 and 1989/114 of 28 July 1989, in particular paragraph 1 (b) thereof regarding the convening of a special meeting of the Council on 4 and 5 July 1991 to discuss the impact of the recent evolution of East-West relations on the growth of the world economy, in particular on the economic growth and development of the developing countries, as well as on international economic co-operation,

*Taking into account also* Economic and Social Council resolution 1990/68 of 27 July 1990 on the special high-level meeting of the Council in 1991,

*Fully convinced* of the need to hold that meeting at a high level,

*Fully convinced also* of the need to ensure adequate preparations for the special high-level meeting, which is the first of its kind and an important concrete step in the process of the revitalization of the Council,

1. *Takes note* of Economic and Social Council resolution 1990/68 and decision 1990/205;

2. *Invites* all Member States and observer States that are in a position to do so to be represented at the ministerial level;

3. *Invites* the Secretary-General, in consultation with the President of the Economic and Social Council, to take all the necessary measures to ensure the adequate preparation of the special high-level meeting of the Council in 1991;

4. *Calls upon* all appropriate organs, organizations, bodies and programmes of the United Nations system to contribute to the success of the special high-level meeting of the Council in 1991;

5. *Decides* to discuss at its forty-sixth session, in the context of the examination of the report of the Economic and Social Council, the outcome of the special high-level meeting.

*71st plenary meeting  
21 December 1990*

**45/183. Assistance to the Palestinian people**

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 44/235 of 22 December 1989,



*Taking into account the intifadah of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory against the Israeli occupation, including Israeli economic and social policies and practices,*

*Rejecting* Israeli restrictions on external economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory,

*Aware of the increasing need to provide economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people,*

*Affirming* that the Palestinian people cannot develop their national economy as long as the Israeli occupation persists,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on assistance to the Palestinian people;<sup>6</sup>

2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations that have provided assistance to the Palestinian people;

3. *Requests* the World Food Programme to provide food assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory;

4. *Requests* the international community, the organizations of the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to sustain and increase their assistance to the Palestinian people, in close co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization;

5. *Calls* for treatment on a transit basis of Palestinian exports and imports passing through neighbouring ports and points of exit and entry;

6. *Also calls* for the granting of trade concessions and concrete preferential measures for Palestinian exports on the basis of Palestinian certificates of origin;

7. *Further calls* for the immediate lifting of Israeli restrictions and obstacles hindering the implementation of assistance projects by the United Nations Development Programme, other United Nations bodies and others providing economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory;

8. *Reiterates its call* for the implementation of development projects in the occupied Palestinian territory, including the projects mentioned in its resolution 39/223 of 18 December 1984;

9. *Calls* for facilitation of the establishment of Palestinian development banks in the occupied Palestinian territory, with a view to promoting investment, production, employment and income therein;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report in full to the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

71st plenary meeting  
21 December 1990

#### 45/184. Co-operation in fisheries in Africa

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 39/225 of 18 December 1984, by which it endorsed the Strategy for Fisheries Manage-

<sup>6</sup> A/45/503.

ment and Development and the associated programmes of action adopted by the World Conference on Fisheries Management and Development,<sup>7</sup>

*Recalling also* its resolution 44/225 of 22 December 1989, entitled "Large-scale pelagic driftnet fishing and its impact on the living marine resources of the world's oceans and seas",

*Recognizing* the significant contribution that fisheries can make to economic growth and development of the developing countries through food self-sufficiency, the improvement of nutrition and the diversification of exports,

*Bearing in mind* the significant capabilities that exist in developing countries in the field of fisheries, which provide opportunities for co-operation among those countries, and the importance of fostering the development of those capabilities to help developing countries realize their full potential in this regard,

*Considering* the need for African countries to develop inter-State co-operation in order to promote the development of the fishery sector,

1. *Endorses* Economic and Social Council resolution 1990/77 of 27 July 1990, entitled "Co-operation in fisheries in Africa", as adopted;

2. *Takes note* of the Ministerial Conference on Co-operation in Fisheries Among the African States Bordering the Atlantic Ocean, held at Rabat from 30 March to 1 April 1989, and of the meeting of the follow-up committee, held also at Rabat, from 29 to 31 May 1990;

3. *Requests* Member States to make full use of advanced marine training centres in Africa, to promote the exchange of information and the joint negotiation of fisheries agreements concerning the high-seas fleets of non-African countries, to accord greater importance to the development of small-scale fishing, to improve the living conditions of African fishermen, to acknowledge the role of women in fisheries, to strengthen fish marketing and preservation facilities and to facilitate the access of African fishery products to the markets of developed countries;

4. *Requests* the relevant international organizations to contribute actively to the promotion of co-operation in fisheries in Africa, including participation in the preparations and work for the forthcoming ministerial conference on co-operation in fisheries among the African States bordering the Atlantic Ocean, which is scheduled to take place in 1991;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit, in close consultation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session, through the Economic and Social Council at its second regular session of 1992, a report on co-operation in fisheries in Africa, including recommendations for its enhancement;

6. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to include in his report ways and means to develop the potential capabilities of developing countries in fisheries, including

<sup>7</sup> See Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *Report of the FAO World Conference on Fisheries Management and Development, Rome, 27 June-6 July 1984* (Rome, 1984), pp. 12-30 and 36-52; transmitted to the members of the General Assembly by a note by the Secretariat (A/C.2/39/6).

ral and economic resources, and regards any infringement thereof as being without any legal validity;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the economic and social consequences of the establishment of settlements by Israel in the Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Syrian Golan.

*79th plenary meeting  
20 December 1991*

**46/200. Target for World Food Programme pledges for the period 1993-1994**

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* the provisions of its resolution 2095 (XX) of 20 December 1965 to the effect that the World Food Programme is to be reviewed before each pledging conference,

*Noting* that the Programme was reviewed by the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes of the World Food Programme at its thirty-first session and by the Economic and Social Council at its second regular session of 1991,

*Having considered* Economic and Social Council resolution 1991/78 of 26 July 1991 and the recommendation of the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes,<sup>78</sup>

*Recognizing* the value of and continuing need for multi-lateral food aid as provided by the World Food Programme since its inception, both as a form of capital investment and for meeting emergency food needs,

1. *Establishes* for the period 1993-1994 a target for voluntary contributions to the World Food Programme of 1.5 billion United States dollars, of which not less than one third should be in cash and/or services, and expresses the hope that those resources will be substantially augmented by additional contributions from other sources in view of the prospective volume of sound project requests and the capacity of the Programme to operate at a higher level;

2. *Urges* States Members of the United Nations and members and associate members of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and appropriate donor organizations to make every effort to ensure that the target is fully attained;

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in cooperation with the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, to convene a pledging conference for this purpose at United Nations Headquarters in 1992.

*79th plenary meeting  
20 December 1991*

**46/201. Assistance to the Palestinian people**

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 45/183 of 21 December 1990,

*Taking into account* the *intifadah* of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory against the Israeli occupation, including Israeli economic and social policies and practices,

*Rejecting* Israeli restrictions on external economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory,

*Concerned* about the economic losses of the Palestinian people as a result of the Gulf crisis,

*Aware* of the increasing need to provide economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Affirming* that the Palestinian people cannot develop their national economy as long as the Israeli occupation persists,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;<sup>79</sup>

2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations that have provided assistance to the Palestinian people;

3. *Requests* the international community, the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to sustain and increase their assistance to the Palestinian people, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization, taking into account the economic losses of the Palestinian people as a result of the Gulf crisis;

4. *Calls* for treatment on a transit basis of Palestinian exports and imports passing through neighbouring ports and points of exit and entry;

5. *Also calls* for the granting of trade concessions and concrete preferential measures for Palestinian exports on the basis of Palestinian certificates of origin;

6. *Further calls* for the immediate lifting of Israeli restrictions and obstacles hindering the implementation of assistance projects by the United Nations Development Programme, other United Nations bodies and others providing economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory;

7. *Reiterates its call* for the implementation of development projects in the occupied Palestinian territory, including the projects mentioned in its resolution 39/223 of 18 December 1984;

8. *Calls* for facilitation of the establishment of Palestinian development banks in the occupied Palestinian territory, with a view to promoting investment, production, employment and income therein;

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

*79th plenary meeting  
20 December 1991*

**46/202. Impact of the recent evolution of East-West relations on the growth of the world economy, in particular on the economic growth and development of the developing countries, as well as on international economic cooperation**

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution S-18/3 of 1 May 1990, the annex to which contains the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, in particular the Revitalization of Economic Growth and Development of the Developing Countries, as well as its resolution 45/199 of 21 December 1990,

and Eastern Europe, and emphasizing the high priority that should be given by the countries concerned to eliminating these dangers through improvements in safety and other appropriate measures, with the support of the international community,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 46/150<sup>37</sup> and the recommendations contained therein on priority areas of international cooperation in studying, mitigating and minimizing the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue the activities related to the follow-up to resolutions 45/190 and 46/150, taking into consideration the subsequent social, economic and other changes that have occurred in the countries most affected by the Chernobyl disaster;

3. *Also requests* the Secretary-General, in the light of his recommendations on priority areas, to undertake an analytical review of all United Nations activities to study, mitigate and minimize the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster in those countries most affected, including related secretariat arrangements, taking full account of ongoing programmes and other relevant activities, including those of regional and other organizations, and the principle of comparative advantage;

4. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session on the implementation of the present resolution, including the conclusions of the analytical review requested in paragraph 3 above, and to submit an oral report to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1993;

5. *Decides* to consider at its forty-eighth session the question of the biennialization of the agenda item entitled "Strengthening of international cooperation and coordination of efforts to study, mitigate and minimize the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster".

*92nd plenary meeting  
18 December 1992*

**47/166. International cooperation and assistance to alleviate the consequences of war in Croatia and to facilitate its recovery**

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991 and the annex thereto,

*Deeply concerned* about the serious aggravation of the humanitarian situation as a direct consequence of the ongoing conflict in the former Yugoslavia,

*Conscious* of the extensive material destruction of major sectors of the national infrastructure, dwellings, the environment and the cultural heritage in Croatia,

*Aware* that, owing to the constant increase in the number of refugees in Croatia, emergency assistance and humanitarian relief should be continued and expanded,

*Deeply concerned* about the suffering of the victims of war and of the tides of refugees and displaced persons,

*Noting* the efforts of the Government of Croatia to solve the problems of the postwar reconstruction of the national infrastructure and, at the same time, to solve the problem of refugees, displaced persons and victims of war within the Republic of Croatia,

*Expressing concern* about the potential effects of the deepening of the crisis in the former Yugoslavia in the event that, *inter alia*, no rapid process of postwar recovery in Croatia is established,

*Recognizing* the importance of the interrelationship between economic recovery and peaceful inter-ethnic relations,

*Recognizing* that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Children's Fund and other organizations and programmes of the United Nations system are providing emergency humanitarian relief assistance to all areas of the former Yugoslavia, including the Republic of Croatia, and that such humanitarian aid should be organized in such a way as to facilitate the recovery of Croatia,

1. *Appeals* to all States, regional organizations, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations and other relevant bodies to provide cooperation in various forms and special and other assistance, in particular in the most severely affected areas and with a view to facilitating the return of refugees and internally displaced persons to those areas;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General, having regard for the continuum ranging from emergency relief to the longer-term development needs of the war-torn region, to initiate, in cooperation with the Government of Croatia, an assessment of needs for the rehabilitation, reconstruction and development of Croatia, and to introduce, if appropriate, an international appeal for the funding of a programme for rehabilitation, reconstruction and development;

3. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive report to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session on the implementation of the present resolution.

*92nd plenary meeting  
18 December 1992*

**47/170. Assistance to the Palestinian people**

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 46/201 of 20 December 1991,

*Taking into account* the *intifadah* of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory against the Israeli occupation, including Israeli economic and social policies and practices,

*Rejecting* Israeli restrictions on external economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory,

*Concerned* about the economic losses of the Palestinian people as a result of the Gulf crisis,

*Aware* of the increasing need to provide economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Affirming* that the Palestinian people cannot develop their national economy as long as the Israeli occupation persists,

*Welcoming* the Middle East peace process started at Madrid on 30 October 1991 and expressing the hope that, despite the difficulties, all sides will pursue this path,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;<sup>38</sup>

2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental and non-govern-

mental organizations that have provided assistance to the Palestinian people;

3. *Requests* the international community, the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to sustain and increase their assistance to the Palestinian people, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization, taking into account the economic losses of the Palestinian people as a result of the Gulf crisis;

4. *Urges* the Government of Israel to accept *de jure* applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,<sup>39</sup> to all territories occupied by Israel since 1967 and to abide scrupulously by the provisions of that Convention;

5. *Calls* for treatment on a transit basis of Palestinian exports and imports passing through neighbouring ports and points of exit and entry;

6. *Also calls* for the granting of trade concessions and concrete preferential measures for Palestinian exports on the basis of Palestinian certificates of origin;

7. *Further calls* for the immediate lifting of Israeli restrictions and obstacles hindering the implementation of assistance projects by the United Nations Development Programme, other United Nations bodies and others providing economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory;

8. *Reiterates its call* for the implementation of development projects in the occupied Palestinian territory, including the projects referred to in its resolution 39/223 of 18 December 1984;

9. *Calls* for facilitation of the establishment of Palestinian development banks in the occupied Palestinian territory, with a view to promoting investment, production, employment and income therein;

10. *Recognizes* the need for convening a seminar on assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, and, in this regard, suggests to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to consider, in its programme for 1992-1993, convening such a seminar, taking into account the assistance needs of the Palestinian people in the light of the developments in the region;

11. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

*93rd plenary meeting  
22 December 1992*

**47/171. Privatization in the context of economic restructuring, economic growth and sustainable development**

*The General Assembly,*

*Reaffirming* its resolution S-18/3 of 1 May 1990, the annex to which contains the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, in particular the Revitalization of Economic Growth and Development of the Developing Countries, and its resolution 45/199 of 21 December 1990, the annex to which contains the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade, as well as other relevant United Nations resolutions,

*Taking note* of the Cartagena Commitment, adopted by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development at its eighth session,<sup>40</sup> and Trade and Development Board decision 398 (XXXVIII) of 7 May 1992,<sup>41</sup> by which, *inter alia*, the Ad Hoc Working Group on Comparative Experiences with Privatization was established, and looking forward to the contribution of the Ad Hoc Working Group,

*Taking note also* of Economic and Social Council resolution 1992/36 of 30 July 1992 on privatization and foreign investment in the context of economic restructuring,

*Recognizing* the sovereign right of each State to decide on the development of its private and public sectors, taking into account the comparative advantages of each sector,

*Noting* that the private sector plays a positive role in mobilizing resources and promoting economic growth and sustainable development,

*Noting also* that many countries are attaching growing importance, in the context of their economic restructuring policies, to the privatization of enterprises and the demonopolization and administrative deregulation of economic activities, as well as market-oriented reforms, increased competition, the elimination of price-distorting mechanisms, and open markets, all as a means to increase economic efficiency, growth and sustainable development,

*Noting further* the difficulties these countries encounter in those policies and that various practical modalities and approaches towards privatization can be considered by them,

1. *Welcomes* the activities being undertaken by relevant organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system in supporting national efforts aimed at increasing economic efficiency, growth and sustainable development through privatization, demonopolization, administrative deregulation of economic activities and other relevant policies, and urges them:

(a) To support, when requested, the national efforts of countries in implementing privatization, demonopolization, administrative deregulation and other relevant policies in the context of their economic reforms and the opening of their economies;

(b) To strengthen their communication and cooperation in supporting the national efforts of countries in privatizing enterprises, demonopolizing and deregulating their economic activities and implementing other relevant policies, and invites the Secretary-General to give due attention to coordination of the United Nations system in this field, through, *inter alia*, the Economic and Social Council and other relevant United Nations bodies;

(c) To take into account, in implementing their respective mandates, the work already undertaken by the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system in order to maximize the efficiency of the system, mindful of the ongoing process of restructuring the system;

2. *Calls upon* interested Member States to enhance the exchange of information among themselves and all relevant organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system on their activities, programmes and experiences concerning privatization, demonopolization, administrative deregulation and other relevant policies in order to increase the efficiency and coordination of technical cooperation in this field;

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General to improve, within existing resources, research activities on all areas of pri-

**48/213. Assistance to the Palestinian people**

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 47/170 of 22 December 1992,

*Welcoming* the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements, including its Annexes and its Agreed Minutes, by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993,<sup>114</sup>

*Gravely concerned* about the difficult economic and employment conditions facing the Palestinian people throughout the occupied territory,

*Conscious* of the need for improvement in the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied territory and in the living conditions of the Palestinian people,

*Aware* that development is difficult under occupation and is best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

*Noting*, in the light of the recent developments, the great economic and social challenges facing the Palestinian people and their leadership,

*Conscious also* of the urgent necessity for international assistance to the Palestinian people, taking into account the Palestinian priorities,

*Noting also* the convening of the United Nations Seminar on Assistance to the Palestinian People, held at the headquarters of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization from 26 to 29 April 1993,

*Stressing* the need for the full engagement of the United Nations in the process of building Palestinian institutions and in providing broad assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Welcoming* the convening of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, held in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993, and the establishment of the high-level United Nations task force to support the economic and social development of the Palestinian people,

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>116</sup>

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;
2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his rapid response and efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people;
3. *Expresses its appreciation also* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental and non-govern-

mental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people;

4. *Welcomes* the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993;

5. *Urges* Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people in order to assist in the development of the West Bank and Gaza, and to do so in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions;

6. *Considers* that an active United Nations role in assisting in the implementation of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements, including its Annexes and its Agreed Minutes, can make a positive contribution;

7. *Calls upon* relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people and to improve coordination through an appropriate mechanism under the auspices of the Secretary-General;

8. *Urges* Member States to open their markets to exports from the West Bank and Gaza on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules;

9. *Suggests* the convening in 1993/94, under the appropriate United Nations auspices, of a seminar on Palestinian trade and investment needs in light of the new developments;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure the coordinated work of the United Nations system for an adequate response to the needs of the Palestinian people and to mobilize financial, technical, economic and other assistance;

11. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution, containing:

- (a) An assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people;
- (b) An assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them;

12. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its forty-ninth session an item entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people".

*86th plenary meeting  
21 December 1993*

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NOTES

<sup>1</sup> For the decisions adopted on the reports of the Second Committee, see sect. IX.B.3.

<sup>2</sup> Resolution S-18/3, annex.

- <sup>93</sup> A/48/504.
- <sup>94</sup> See S/26317, sect. IV; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-eighth Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1993*, document S/26317.
- <sup>95</sup> See S/22609, annex; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-sixth Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1991*, document S/22609.
- <sup>96</sup> A/48/473.
- <sup>97</sup> A/48/310.
- <sup>98</sup> S/26790; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-eighth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1993*, document S/26790.
- <sup>99</sup> A/46/864-S/23501, annex; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-seventh Year, Supplement for January, February and March 1992*, document S/23501.
- <sup>100</sup> A/48/534.
- <sup>101</sup> A/48/215, annex.
- <sup>102</sup> A/48/364.
- <sup>103</sup> See A/48/564, annex, section entitled "Commonwealth functional cooperation: report of the Committee of the Whole", para. 28.
- <sup>104</sup> See A/48/406, sect. II.B, para. 16 .
- <sup>105</sup> A/48/406.
- <sup>106</sup> A/48/574.
- <sup>107</sup> A/48/323 and Add.1.
- <sup>108</sup> A/48/585.
- <sup>109</sup> A/48/573-S/26705; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-eighth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1993*, document S/26705.
- <sup>110</sup> S/25036; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-seventh Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1992*, document S/25036.
- <sup>111</sup> See S/26350; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-eighth Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1993*, document S/26350.
- <sup>112</sup> DHA/93/54.
- <sup>113</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.
- <sup>114</sup> A/48/486-S/26560, annex; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-eighth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1993*, document S/26560.
- <sup>115</sup> A/48/188-E/1993/78.
- <sup>116</sup> A/48/183-E/1993/74 and Add.1.



**General Assembly**

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19 January 1995

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Forty-ninth session  
Agenda item 37 (b)

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/49/L.26/Rev.1, A/49/L.32/Rev.1, A/49/L.34/Rev.1, A/49/L.36/Rev.1 and Rev.1/Add.1, A/49/L.37/Rev.1 and Rev.1/Add.1, A/49/L.39/Rev.1 and Rev.1/Add.1, A/49/L.41/Rev.1, A/49/L.42/Rev.1, A/49/L.48/Rev.2 and A/49/L.50)]

49/21. Special economic assistance to individual countries or regions

D

Assistance to Mozambique

The General Assembly,

Recalling Security Council resolutions 386 (1976) of 17 March 1976 and 782 (1992) of 13 October 1992,

Recalling also its relevant resolutions, in particular resolution 45/227 of 21 December 1990 and resolution 47/42 of 9 December 1992, in which it urged the international community to respond effectively and generously to the call for assistance to Mozambique,

Reaffirming the principles for humanitarian assistance contained in the annex to its resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991,

Recalling further its resolution 48/7 of 19 October 1993 on assistance in mine clearance, and noting with great concern the proliferation of land-mines in areas that had been the scene of war in Mozambique,

Bearing in mind the donors conference held at Rome in December 1992 and the follow-up meeting held at Maputo in June 1993, the main objective of which



was to mobilize resources for post-war programming in support of the resettlement and reintegration of returning refugees, internally displaced persons and demobilized soldiers,

Bearing in mind also the Paris Declaration and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s, 1/ adopted by the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries on 14 September 1990,

Stressing the need for continuing support for humanitarian assistance in view of the ongoing process of repatriation, resettlement and reintegration of the returning refugees, internally displaced persons and demobilized soldiers,

Stressing also that Mozambique is emerging from a devastating war and that a proper response to the current situation in the country requires substantial international assistance provided in a comprehensive and integrated manner and linking humanitarian assistance with economic aid for national reconstruction and development,

Noting with gratitude the mobilization and allocation by relevant organizations of the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations of resources for a post-war consolidated humanitarian assistance programme for Mozambique,

Welcoming the role played by all parties and the people of Mozambique in general in the implementation of the General Peace Agreement for Mozambique, signed at Rome on 4 October 1992, 2/ whose main goals are the establishment of lasting peace, the enhancement of democracy and the promotion of national reconciliation in that country,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General of 16 September 1994 on assistance to Mozambique, 3/

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General;
2. Expresses its gratitude to all States and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations that have rendered assistance to Mozambique;
3. Notes with appreciation that a mine-clearance programme is under way in Mozambique, with the support of the United Nations, in close cooperation with Governments and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and urges the international community to continue to provide the needed assistance for the accomplishment of the mine-clearance programme in that country;

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1/ Report of the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, Paris, 3-14 September 1990 (A/CONF.147/18), part one.

2/ See S/24635 and Corr.1.

3/ A/49/387 and Corr.1.

4. Commends the people of Mozambique for their diligence and tireless efforts in pursuit of lasting peace and stability in that country;

5. Expresses its satisfaction at the successful implementation of the General Peace Agreement for Mozambique, which has created favourable conditions for the establishment of lasting peace, the enhancement of democracy, the promotion of national reconciliation and the implementation of a programme of national reconstruction and development for Mozambique;

6. Welcomes the successful implementation of the General Peace Agreement, which culminated in the holding of multi-party elections in October 1994 in that country;

7. Calls upon the international community and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to continue to render their generous assistance to Mozambique in the form of financial, material and technical support for the repatriation of refugees and the resettlement and reintegration of the returning refugees, internally displaced persons and demobilized soldiers;

8. Appeals to the international community to extend its support to the Government and people of Mozambique in order to establish lasting peace and democracy and to promote an effective programme of national reconstruction and development in that country;

9. Requests the Secretary-General, in close cooperation with the Government of Mozambique:

(a) To continue his efforts to mobilize international assistance for the national reconstruction and development of Mozambique;

(b) To ensure the coordination of the work of the United Nations system for an adequate response to the humanitarian assistance and development needs of Mozambique;

(c) To prepare a report on international assistance for the national reconstruction and development of Mozambique for submission to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session.

93rd plenary meeting  
20 December 1994

E

Assistance for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Liberia

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 45/232 of 21 December 1990, 46/147 of 17 December 1991, 47/154 of 18 December 1992 and 48/197 of 21 December 1993,

Taking note of Security Council resolution 950 (1994) of 21 October 1994, in which the Council, inter alia, decided to extend the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia until 13 January 1995, called on all factions to cease hostilities and agree to a timetable for disarmament and

/...

demobilization, and called on the Liberian National Transitional Government and all Liberians to seek political accommodation and national reconciliation,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General of 7 October 1994, 4/

Commending the Economic Community of West African States for its continuing efforts to find a resolution of the conflict and to restore peace and stability in Liberia,

Commending also the positive role being played by the President of Ghana, in his capacity as current Chairman of the Economic Community of West African States, to reactivate the peace process and find a durable solution to the conflict,

Noting that, even though a viable country-wide emergency assistance programme has been instituted, security and logistic problems continue seriously to hamper relief assistance, particularly in the interior, and have prevented the transition from emergency relief to reconstruction and development,

Gravely concerned about the devastating effects of the protracted conflict on the socio-economic conditions in Liberia, and noting the urgent need to rehabilitate, in an atmosphere of peace and stability, basic sectors of the country in order to restore normalcy,

Recognizing the importance of the commitment to the peace process by all parties and factions and the need to create an enabling environment in which assistance can be delivered,

1. Expresses its gratitude to Member States and international and non-governmental organizations that have responded and continue to respond to appeals by the Liberian National Transitional Government and to the appeals by the Secretary-General for emergency assistance;

2. Expresses its gratitude also to the Secretary-General for his continuing efforts to mobilize the international community, the United Nations and other organizations to provide emergency assistance to Liberia, and urges that such assistance be continued;

3. Calls upon the international community and intergovernmental organizations to provide Liberia with technical, financial and other assistance for the repatriation and resettlement of Liberian refugees, returnees and displaced persons and for the rehabilitation of combatants, which constitute important elements for facilitating the transition from emergency assistance to reconstruction and the holding of democratic elections in Liberia;

4. Appeals to the international community and intergovernmental organizations to provide adequate assistance to programmes identified in the report of the Secretary-General, including the preparation of a new appeal

for humanitarian assistance to cover emergency assistance needs and to support the peace process, strengthening existing programmes and projects to stimulate the local economy through, inter alia, increased agricultural output and food-aid monetization, and supporting the formulation of an economic rehabilitation strategy and area development scheme to assist the resettlement and reintegration of affected communities;

5. Reiterates its appeal to the international community and intergovernmental organizations to contribute generously to the Trust Fund established by the Secretary-General, in order to enable the Military Observer Group of the Economic Community of West African States to fulfil its mandate and to help defray the cost of deployment of additional troops from outside the subregion;

6. Calls upon all parties and factions in Liberia to respect fully the security and safety of personnel of the United Nations and the specialized agencies, as well as of non-governmental organizations, to guarantee their complete freedom of movement throughout Liberia, and to take all measures necessary to create an atmosphere conducive to the successful resolution of the Liberian conflict;

7. Requests the Secretary-General:

(a) To continue his efforts to coordinate the work of the United Nations system and to mobilize financial, technical and other assistance for the holding of democratic elections and the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Liberia;

(b) To undertake, when conditions permit, in close collaboration with the authorities of Liberia, an overall assessment of needs, with the objective of holding, when appropriate, a round-table conference of donors for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Liberia;

8. Also requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session on the implementation of the present resolution;

9. Decides to consider at its fiftieth session the question of international assistance for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Liberia.

93rd plenary meeting  
20 December 1994

F

Assistance for the reconstruction and development of Djibouti

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 47/157 of 18 December 1992 and its previous resolutions on economic assistance to Djibouti,

Recalling also the Paris Declaration and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s, 1/ adopted by the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries on 14 September 1990, as

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well as the mutual commitments undertaken on that occasion and the importance attached to the follow-up to that Conference,

Deeply distressed by the large number of persons afflicted by the torrential rains and unprecedented flooding in Djibouti in November 1994 and by the significant damage and devastation to property and infrastructure,

Noting with concern the death, injury and disappearance of scores of people and the mounting needs of thousands of displaced persons, as well as the destruction of dwellings, particularly in poorer districts, and the disintegration of important parts of the national infrastructure, in particular the road and rail networks, water supply, clinics and hospitals, educational institutions and other public services,

Recognizing the extensive damage to the limited agricultural resources of Djibouti, including the destruction of its livestock,

Aware of the efforts of the Government and people of Djibouti to save human lives and to alleviate the suffering of the 100,000 victims of the disaster,

Noting that the economic and social development efforts of Djibouti, which is included in the list of least developed countries, are constrained by the extremes of the local climate, in particular cyclical droughts and torrential rains and floods such as those which are now occurring and which occurred in 1989, and noting also that the implementation of reconstruction and development programmes requires the deployment of substantial resources which exceed the real capacity of the country,

Noting with concern that the situation in Djibouti has been made worse by the deteriorating situation in the Horn of Africa and in particular in Somalia, and noting the presence of over 100,000 refugees and persons displaced from their countries, which has, on the one hand, placed serious strains on the fragile economic, social and administrative infrastructure of the country and, on the other, caused serious security problems,

Noting the critical economic and financial situation of Djibouti resulting in part from the number of priority development projects that have had to be suspended in view of serious developments in the international situation, and in part from the effects of the regional conflicts, notably in Somalia, which have disrupted services, transport and trade and which are draining the State of most of its revenues,

Noting also the need for the efficient mobilization of local resources to complement external assistance,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General of 5 October 1994, 5/

Noting with gratitude the support provided to emergency relief operations by various countries and by intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations,

Also noting with gratitude the support provided by the French forces stationed in Djibouti, whose exemplary actions and interventions in cooperation with Government forces helped to save several thousand human lives during the floods,

1. Declares its solidarity with the Government and people of Djibouti in the face of the devastating consequences of the torrential rains and floods and the new economic realities of Djibouti, resulting in particular from the continuing critical situation in the Horn of Africa, especially in Somalia;

2. Calls upon all States to contribute generously to the relief operations and rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts now under way;

3. Expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his efforts to make the international community aware of the difficulties faced by Djibouti;

4. Welcomes the signing of the agreement on 14 November 1994 between the Government of Djibouti and the United Nations Development Programme to hold a round-table meeting at Geneva in March 1995 for the benefit of the country;

5. Calls upon all States, all regional and interregional organizations, non-governmental organizations and other intergovernmental agencies, in particular the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Food Programme, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the World Bank, to provide Djibouti with appropriate assistance, on a bilateral and multilateral basis, to enable it to cope with its special economic difficulties;

6. Considers that implementation of the demobilization programme and of the national rehabilitation plan and reinforcement of democratic institutions require generous assistance in the form of financial and material support;

7. Emphasizes the importance of efficient use of external technical and financial assistance and of the mobilization of local resources for carrying out activities aimed at consolidating democracy and promoting the welfare of the population, and encourages efforts in this regard;

8. Requests the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to mobilize the resources necessary for an effective programme of financial, technical and material assistance to Djibouti;

9. Also requests the Secretary-General to prepare a study of the progress made with economic assistance to that country, in time for the question to be considered by the General Assembly at its fiftieth session.

93rd plenary meeting  
20 December 1994

G

International cooperation and assistance to alleviate the consequences of war in Croatia and to facilitate its recovery

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 46/182 of 19 December 1991 and the annex thereto, and 47/166 of 18 December 1992,

Reaffirming its resolution 48/204 of 21 December 1993,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General of 21 November 1994, 6/ which provides information on the status of implementation of resolution 48/204,

Taking note with appreciation of the actions that were undertaken under the United Nations consolidated inter-agency appeals in the field of humanitarian relief, and those within the framework of the regular programme of the United Nations Development Programme,

Reaffirming the importance of the overall United Nations humanitarian effort in Croatia,

Affirming the general importance of the humanitarian relief actions and the need to transform them into longer-term development programmes, particularly in areas damaged as a consequence of war,

Recognizing the continuous efforts of the Government of Croatia to create the necessary conditions for post-war reconstruction,

1. Requests the Secretary-General to appoint, within existing resources, a fact-finding expert mission for Croatia to assess the extent of war damage and its consequences for the country's infrastructure, resources, environment and individuals, and to consider the needs in order to assist the Government of Croatia in preparing a programme for the rehabilitation, reconstruction and development of Croatia, and to introduce, if appropriate, an international appeal for its funding;

2. Reaffirms its appeal to all States, regional, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other relevant bodies to provide cooperation in various forms and special and other assistance, in particular in the most severely affected areas, with a view to facilitating peaceful reintegration through the programme of reconstruction and development;

3. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session a comprehensive report on the implementation of the present resolution.

93rd plenary meeting  
20 December 1994



H

Special Plan of Economic Cooperation for Central America

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 42/1 of 7 October 1987, 43/24 of 15 November 1988, 44/10 of 23 October 1989 and 45/15 of 20 November 1990, and in particular its resolutions 42/204 of 11 December 1987, 42/231 of 12 May 1988, 43/210 of 20 December 1988, 44/182 of 19 December 1989, 45/231 of 21 December 1990, 46/170 of 19 December 1991 and 48/199 of 21 December 1993,

Recalling also the importance of the steps taken by the Secretary-General for the establishment of the Special Plan of Economic Cooperation for Central America 7/ in support of efforts to reach a political solution to the Central American crisis,

Recognizing the valuable and effective economic and financial contribution that the United Nations and various governmental and non-governmental mechanisms have made to complement the national efforts for the advancement of the process of pacification, democratization and development in Central America,

Recognizing also the important work done by the United Nations Development Programme in discharging the responsibilities entrusted to it for the coordination of the Special Plan, in accordance with the decisions that the Central American Governments have taken on the subject, as well as by other specialized agencies of the United Nations system,

Noting with satisfaction the contribution of the Special Plan to the formulation and execution of priority programmes for development in the subregion, in the specific areas outlined in the report of the Secretary-General of 12 October 1994, 8/ submitted pursuant to its resolution 48/199,

Taking into account the conclusion in May 1994 of the process established by the International Conference on Central American Refugees, as well as the depletion of resources and the anticipated end of the Special Plan on 31 December 1994, in compliance with its resolution 45/231,

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the Special Plan of Economic Cooperation for Central America, 8/ which describes the activities conducted under the Special Plan, together with requirements in terms of the resources and financial assistance indispensable to the continued implementation of priority programmes and projects favouring the consolidation of the peace and development process in the subregion;
2. Expresses its thanks to the Secretary-General for his additional efforts in support of the pacification process in Central America;

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7/ A/42/949, annex.

8/ A/49/397.

3. Expresses its appreciation to all States, to the donor community in particular, to intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, international financial institutions, specialized agencies of the United Nations system and regional and subregional organizations for the support and solidarity offered in the execution of programmes and projects carried out in the framework of the Special Plan and the International Conference on Central American Refugees;

4. Stresses the importance of maintaining international economic, technical and financial assistance and cooperation, both bilateral and multilateral, to complement the national efforts to consolidate peace, democracy and sustainable development in order to avoid a reversal of the achievements and advances made in the process.

93rd plenary meeting  
20 December 1994

I

International assistance to and cooperation with the Alliance  
for the Sustainable Development of Central America

The General Assembly,

Considering the relevant resolutions regarding the importance of international economic, financial and technical cooperation and assistance during the post-conflict period of transition to a consolidated peace,

Recalling the efforts and aspirations of the peoples and Governments of the isthmus to make Central America a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development,

Bearing in mind the conclusion of the Special Plan of Economic Cooperation for Central America 7/ and the International Conference on Central American Refugees, the implementation of which has furthered the development process in Central America and served as a useful mechanism for facilitating dialogue within the subregion and with the cooperating community,

Considering the Declaration of Commitments in favour of populations affected by uprootedness and by conflicts and extreme poverty in the framework of the consolidation of peace in Central America, adopted at the third international meeting of the Follow-up Committee of the International Conference on Central American Refugees, held at Mexico City on 28 and 29 June 1994, which recognizes that there is a pending agenda and that it is necessary to shift the orientation of emergency programmes and move into a stage focusing on strategies for sustainable human development in priority areas selected by the countries, with the aim of consolidating peace and eradicating social problems, in particular extreme poverty,

Recognizing that, notwithstanding the progress made, it is necessary to continue monitoring the situation in Central America until the underlying structural causes that gave rise to the deep crisis into which the region was plunged have been overcome, and to avoid setbacks in the process and consolidate a firm and lasting peace in Central America,

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Recognizing also the importance and validity of the commitments assumed by the Central American Presidents from the Esquipulas II summit meeting on 7 August 1987 9/ to the present, in particular at the summit meeting held at Guácimo, Costa Rica, from 18 to 20 August 1994, 10/ the Central American Environment Summit for Sustainable Development, held at Managua on 12 and 13 October 1994 11/ and the International Conference on Peace and Development in Central America, held at Tegucigalpa on 24 and 25 October 1994, 12/ at which the priorities of the subregion were set for establishing the framework for a new programme of international assistance and cooperation for Central America,

Noting with satisfaction that, in his report of 12 October 1994 on the Special Plan, 8/ the Secretary-General stated that continued efforts were needed to solve old structural problems, which were a source of strain and were obstacles to a firm and lasting peace in the region,

Noting the efforts of the Central American Governments to seek solutions to social inequalities, extreme poverty and social exclusion and to promote new, broader forms of participation and opportunities for their nationals as part of the new strategy for sustainable human development, and noting also the internal material and financial limitations to the full and effective achievement of these objectives,

Taking into consideration the will of the Central American Presidents to adopt a national and regional strategy entitled "Alliance for Sustainable Development" 11/ as a comprehensive initiative in the political, moral, economic, social and ecological fields, which includes a re-defining of the relations of Central America with the international community and is aimed at improving the well-being of the peoples of the subregion,

1. Emphasizes the compelling need to design a new programme for international economic, financial and technical cooperation and assistance for Central America geared to the new circumstances in the region and based on the priorities laid down in the Declaration of Commitments adopted by the Follow-up Committee of the International Conference on Central American Refugees and in the new subregional strategy, the Alliance for Sustainable Development;

2. Supports the efforts of the Central American Governments in their commitments to the alleviation of extreme poverty and the fostering of sustainable human development, and urges them to intensify their efforts to implement policies and programmes, especially of an appropriate social and environmental character, in carrying out those commitments;

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9/ See A/42/521-S/19085.

10/ See A/49/340-S/1994/994.

11/ See A/49/580-S/1994/1217.

12/ See A/49/639-S/1994/1247.

3. Stresses the importance of international economic, financial and technical cooperation in implementing the commitments of the new strategy for sustainable human development in Central America;

4. Requests the Secretary-General, the United Nations system and, in particular, the United Nations Development Programme to continue their efforts to mobilize resources in order to put into effect the new strategy for integral development in Central America contained in the Alliance for Sustainable Development and in the Declaration of Commitments, through arrangements that the Central American countries are to determine jointly with the cooperating community;

5. Urges all States, intergovernmental organizations, international financial institutions, the organs and specialized agencies of the United Nations system and regional and subregional organizations to continue the necessary support for the implementation of the goals and objectives of the new strategy for integral development in Central America;

6. Again stresses the urgent need for the international community to maintain its cooperation with the Central American countries and to provide them with the necessary financial resources, in a sustained manner and on soft terms, where appropriate, with a view to promoting effectively the economic growth and development of the region;

7. Supports the decision taken by the Central American Presidents at their fourteenth and fifteenth summit meetings with respect to the adoption of decentralization policies oriented to human development at the local level and linked where appropriate to macroeconomic policies, in response to the need to complete the transition from humanitarian assistance to development cooperation, and from emergency cooperation to the establishment and implementation of sustainable human development programmes;

8. Expresses the view that only by solving the political, economic, social and environmental problems that are the cause of tensions and conflicts in society will it be possible to avoid a reversal of the achievements and guarantee a firm and lasting peace in Central America;

9. Requests the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of the present resolution to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session, and decides to consider the question of international assistance to and cooperation with the Alliance for Sustainable Development in Central America at that session and subsequently on a biennial basis.

93rd plenary meeting  
20 December 1994

J

Assistance for the reconstruction and development of El Salvador

The General Assembly,

Recalling Security Council resolutions 784 (1992) of 30 October 1992 and 961 (1994) of 23 November 1994, and reaffirming its resolutions 47/158 of 18 December 1992 and 48/203 of 21 December 1993,

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Having considered the reports of the Secretary-General of 21 October 1994 on assistance for the reconstruction and development of El Salvador 13/ and of 31 October and 14 November 1994 on the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador, 14/

Noting with satisfaction the progress made in implementing the commitments assumed as a result of the signing of the Chapultepec Agreement between the Government of El Salvador and the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional, 15/ on 16 January 1992 at Mexico City, which put an end to the armed conflict in El Salvador through a negotiation process developed under the auspices of the Secretary-General,

Noting that, in spite of national efforts and the support given by the international community to the implementation of priority programmes in the National Reconstruction Plan and the strengthening of democratic institutions, as well as to the implementation of certain priority programmes relating to the Peace Agreement, which are crucial to the consolidation of peace, some of these programmes have continued to be affected by, inter alia, the limited availability of financial resources,

Recognizing that El Salvador is in a crucial stage of transition from peace-keeping to the consolidation of peace, through the implementation of the remaining commitments under the Peace Agreement and the strengthening of integral and sustainable development programmes, and emphasizing the importance and necessity of international technical and financial assistance for the sustainability of those programmes in support of national efforts to secure a firm and lasting peace,

Taking into account the need to ensure the full implementation of the commitments undertaken in the Peace Agreement and to strengthen the national machinery which will monitor the consolidation of the peace process following the completion of the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador,

Noting with satisfaction the joint declaration by the Government of El Salvador and the Frente Farabundo Martí of 4 October 1994, 16/ in which they agree to cooperate closely and actively to expedite the implementation of the remaining commitments under the Peace Agreement and the dispatch of a joint mission to donor countries and institutions to conduct negotiations in order to obtain the resources required for the promotion and consolidation of peace and development in El Salvador,

1. Again expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General and his representatives for their effective and timely participation, to the Group of Friends of the Secretary-General, Colombia, Spain, Mexico and Venezuela, and

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13/ A/49/562.

14/ S/1994/1212 and Add.1.

15/ See A/46/864-S/23501.

16/ See S/1994/1144.

to the United States of America and other interested States for their contribution to building peace in El Salvador;

2. Again expresses its gratitude to the international community, especially the cooperating community, to the specialized agencies of the United Nations system and to international development and financing institutions, both governmental and non-governmental, for the technical and financial assistance they have provided to El Salvador to complement the effort to consolidate peace;

3. Recognizes that the implementation of the remaining commitments of the Peace Agreement, the continuation of programmes of national reconstruction, the strengthening of democratic institutions and the promotion of sustainable development constitute the collective goals, aspirations and needs of the country in overcoming the root causes of the crisis and consolidating peace, democracy and human well-being;

4. Again calls upon the signatories to the Chapultepec Agreement to expedite the implementation of the remaining commitments under that Agreement, in accordance with the joint declaration signed on 4 October 1994, 16/ in order to guarantee fully the building of peace in El Salvador and hence to encourage the international community to increase the level of financial resources accorded to priority projects for reconstruction, development and the strengthening of democratic institutions in El Salvador;

5. Requests all States and international institutions active in the field of international development and financing to continue to contribute to the building of peace in El Salvador, urging them to respond flexibly and generously to the joint efforts by the Government of El Salvador and the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional to put together the resources needed to implement fully the Peace Agreement and other priority development programmes conducive to the establishment of a strong and lasting peace in El Salvador;

6. Invites the international financial organizations to work with the Government of El Salvador in considering measures to harmonize the priority programmes arising out of the Peace Agreement and the National Reconstruction Plan with economic adjustment and stabilization policies in order to facilitate the consolidation of the peace process and make it more viable;

7. Again requests the Secretary-General to take the necessary measures and make every possible effort to mobilize the material and financial resources needed to meet the requirements of the priority programmes in El Salvador that are critical to the successful outcome of the peace process;

8. Requests the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of the present resolution to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session and decides to consider the question of assistance for the reconstruction and development of El Salvador at that session and subsequently on a biennial basis.

93rd plenary meeting  
20 December 1994

K

Emergency assistance to the Sudan

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 43/8 of 18 October 1988, 43/52 of 6 December 1988, 44/12 of 24 October 1989, 45/226 of 21 December 1990, 46/178 of 19 December 1991, 47/162 of 18 December 1992 and 48/200 of 21 December 1993 on assistance to the Sudan,

Noting that, despite the progress made in the Sudan Emergency Operation and Operation Lifeline Sudan, considerable relief needs still remain to be addressed, particularly in the areas of non-food assistance, including assistance to combat malaria, logistics and emergency recovery and rehabilitation,

Recognizing the need in emergency situations to address the continuum of relief, rehabilitation and development,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General of 12 September 1994 on emergency assistance to the Sudan, 17/ and of the statement made by the representative of the Sudan before the General Assembly on 23 November 1994, 18/

1. Appreciates and encourages increased cooperation by the Government of the Sudan with the United Nations, takes note of the agreements and arrangements achieved to facilitate relief operations through improvement of United Nations assistance to affected areas, and encourages the Government of the Sudan to continue to improve their implementation;

2. Calls upon the international community to continue to contribute generously to the emergency needs and recovery of the country;

3. Calls upon the donor community and the United Nations system to provide financial, technical and medical assistance, guided by the actions called for by the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, to combat malaria in the Sudan;

4. Appeals to all parties concerned to continue to pursue dialogue and negotiations and to terminate hostilities to allow for the re-establishment of peace, order and stability and also to facilitate relief efforts;

5. Stresses the importance of assuring safe access for personnel providing relief assistance to all in need;

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17/ A/49/376.

18/ See A/49/PV.65.

6. Urges all parties involved to continue to offer all feasible assistance, including facilitating the movement of relief supplies and personnel, so as to guarantee maximum success of the Sudan Emergency Operation and Operation Lifeline Sudan in all parts of the country;

7. Requests the Secretary-General to continue to mobilize and coordinate resources and support to the Sudan Emergency Operation and Operation Lifeline Sudan, to assess the emergency situation in the country and to report thereon, as well as on the recovery and rehabilitation of the country, to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session.

93rd plenary meeting  
20 December 1994

L

Assistance for humanitarian relief and the economic  
and social rehabilitation of Somalia

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 43/206 of 20 December 1988, 44/178 of 19 December 1989, 45/229 of 21 December 1990, 46/176 of 19 December 1991, 47/160 of 18 December 1992 and 48/201 of 21 December 1993 and the resolutions and decisions of the Economic and Social Council on emergency assistance to Somalia,

Recalling also Security Council resolution 733 (1992) of 23 January 1992 and all subsequent relevant resolutions, in which the Council, inter alia, urged all parties, movements and factions in Somalia to facilitate the efforts of the United Nations, its specialized agencies and humanitarian organizations to provide urgent humanitarian assistance to the affected population in Somalia and reiterated the call for the full respect of the security and safety of the personnel of those organizations and the guarantee of their complete freedom of movement in and around Mogadishu and other parts of Somalia,

Recalling, in particular, Security Council resolution 954 (1994) of 4 November 1994, in which the Council, inter alia, decided to extend the mandate of the United Nations Operation in Somalia II for a final period until 31 March 1995 and to withdraw all forces of the Operation before the expiry date of the current mandate, and noting the interest of humanitarian agencies and non-governmental organizations in cooperating with the United Nations after the withdrawal of the Operation in transitional arrangements for mutual assistance, security conditions permitting,

Noting the cooperation between the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity, the League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the countries of the Horn of Africa and the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement in their efforts to resolve the humanitarian, security and political crisis in Somalia,

Noting with appreciation the continued efforts made by the Secretary-General to assist the Somali people in their efforts to promote peace, stability and national reconciliation,

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Noting with concern that the failure of the Somali parties to achieve political reconciliation and to maintain secure conditions in some parts of the country impedes the full transition from relief operations to reconstruction and development,

Reaffirming the importance it attaches to the results of the Fourth Coordination Meeting for Humanitarian Assistance for Somalia, held at Addis Ababa from 29 November to 1 December 1993,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General of 30 September 1994 on assistance for humanitarian relief and the economic and social rehabilitation of Somalia, 19/

Deeply appreciative of the humanitarian assistance and rehabilitation support rendered by a number of States to alleviate the hardship and suffering of the affected Somali population,

Recognizing that the emergency phase of the present crisis can be considered over and that there is a need for a parallel process of rehabilitation and reconstruction alongside the ongoing relief operations in those areas where security and stability have been attained,

Re-emphasizing the importance of the further implementation of its resolution 47/160 to rehabilitate basic social and economic services at local and regional levels throughout the country,

1. Expresses its gratitude to all States and the intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations that have responded to the appeals of the Secretary-General and others by extending assistance to Somalia;

2. Expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his continued and tireless efforts to mobilize assistance to the Somali people;

3. Welcomes the ongoing efforts of the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity, the League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the countries of the Horn of Africa and the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement to resolve the situation in Somalia;

4. Urges all States and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to continue the further implementation of resolution 47/160 in order to assist the Somali people in embarking on the rehabilitation of basic social and economic services as well as institution-building aimed at the restoration of civil administration at the local level in all those parts of the country where peace, security and stability prevail;

5. Appeals to all the Somali parties concerned to terminate hostilities and to engage in a national reconciliation process that will allow for the transition from relief to reconstruction and development;

6. Calls upon all parties, movements and factions in Somalia to respect fully the security and safety of personnel of the United Nations and its specialized agencies and of non-governmental organizations and to guarantee their complete freedom of movement throughout Somalia;

7. Calls upon the Secretary-General to continue to mobilize international humanitarian, rehabilitation and reconstruction assistance for Somalia;

8. Requests the Secretary-General, in view of the critical situation in Somalia, to take all measures necessary for the implementation of the present resolution, to apprise the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1995 of the progress made and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session.

93rd plenary meeting  
20 December 1994

M

Special assistance to front-line States and other neighbouring States

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 47/163 of 18 December 1992,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General of 27 October 1994 on special assistance to front-line States and other neighbouring States, 20/

Noting that the front-line States and other neighbouring States of southern Africa continue to suffer from the adverse economic and social effects of past acts of destabilization in the region,

Welcoming the strengthening of democratic governance and other recent positive developments in the region, including the holding of elections and the installation of a democratic Government in South Africa, the successful implementation of the General Peace Agreement for Mozambique, signed at Rome on 4 October 1992, 2/ which culminated in the holding of multi-party elections in that country, as well as the holding of multi-party elections in Malawi and the restoration of democratic rule in Lesotho,

Also welcoming the recent positive developments which have taken place in Angola, culminating in the signing of the Lusaka Protocol on 20 November 1994 and the entry into force of the cease-fire on 22 November 1994,

Gravely concerned that drought continues to affect some parts of the region of southern Africa,

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20/ A/49/581.

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1. Expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his efforts regarding assistance to the front-line States and other neighbouring States;

2. Notes with appreciation the support being rendered to the front-line States and other neighbouring States by donor countries, organizations of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations;

3. Also expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General, the donor countries and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations for the invaluable assistance they continue to render towards the alleviation of the serious effects of the continuing drought in the region of southern Africa;

4. Appeals to the international community to continue to extend assistance to the front-line States and other neighbouring States of southern Africa to enable them to overcome the negative consequences of past acts of destabilization in the region;

5. Strongly urges the international community to continue to provide, in a timely and effective manner, the financial, material and technical assistance necessary to enhance the individual and collective capacity of the front-line States and other neighbouring States in their efforts towards the reconstruction, rehabilitation and development of their economies;

6. Requests the Secretary-General and organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to respond to such requests for assistance as may be made by individual States or the appropriate regional organizations, and urges all States and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to respond favourably to such requests;

7. Welcomes the recent positive political developments in Angola, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique and South Africa;

8. Calls upon the Government of Angola and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola to adhere to the provisions of the Lusaka Protocol;

9. Appeals to all States and appropriate intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to support, in the context, inter alia, of the continuing drought in parts of the region, national and collective emergency programmes prepared by the front-line States and other neighbouring States to overcome their critical humanitarian and emergency problems, taking into account the special circumstances of the most affected countries;

10. Appeals to the international community to extend assistance to the front-line States and other neighbouring States in their efforts to advance the process of regional economic integration as envisaged in the Treaty of 17 August 1992 establishing the Southern African Development Community, which now includes South Africa;

11. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

93rd plenary meeting  
20 December 1994

N

Assistance to the Palestinian people

The General Assembly,

Recalling Economic and Social Council resolution 1994/29 of 27 July 1994,

Recalling also previous resolutions on the question,

Welcoming the signing at Cairo on 4 May 1994 by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, of the first implementation agreement of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements, 21/ namely, the Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area, 22/ and the Agreement on Preparatory Transfer of Powers and Responsibilities of 29 August 1994,

Gravely concerned about the difficult economic and employment conditions facing the Palestinian people throughout the occupied territory,

Conscious of the urgent need for improvement in the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied territory and the living conditions of the Palestinian people,

Aware that development is difficult under occupation and best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

Noting, in the light of the recent developments, the great economic and social challenges facing the Palestinian people and their leadership,

Conscious of the urgent necessity for international assistance to the Palestinian people, taking into account the Palestinian priorities,

Noting the convening of the United Nations Seminar on Palestinian Trade and Investment Needs, held at the headquarters of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization from 20 to 22 June 1994,

Welcoming the signing of the agreements between the Palestine Liberation Organization and the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations

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21/ See A/48/486-S/26560.

22/ See A/49/180-S/1994/727.

Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the International Labour Organisation,

Stressing the need for the full engagement of the United Nations in the process of building Palestinian institutions and in providing broad assistance to the Palestinian people, including assistance in the fields of elections, police training and public administration,

Noting the appointment by the Secretary-General in June 1994 of a Special Coordinator in the occupied territories,

Welcoming the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington on 1 October 1993, and the establishment of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee and the work being done by the World Bank as its secretariat, as well as the establishment of the consultative group,

Welcoming also the results of the meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee on 29 and 30 November 1994 at Brussels,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General of 19 July 1994, 23/

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General;
2. Expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his rapid response and efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people;
3. Also expresses its appreciation to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people;
4. Stresses the importance of the appointment of the Special Coordinator in the occupied territories and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories;
5. Urges Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people in order to assist in the development of the West Bank and Gaza, and to do so in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions;
6. Calls upon relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in accordance with the Palestinian priorities set forth by the Palestinian Authority with emphasis on national execution and capacity-building;

7. Urges Member States to open their markets to exports from the West Bank and Gaza and on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules;

8. Calls upon the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs;

9. Suggests the convening in 1995 of a United Nations-sponsored seminar on Palestinian administrative, managerial and financial needs and challenges in the light of the new developments;

10. Requests the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution, containing:

(a) An assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people;

(b) An assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them;

11. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fiftieth session, under the item entitled "Strengthening the coordination of the humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance", a sub-item entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people".

93rd plenary meeting  
20 December 1994

**50/58. Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: special economic assistance to individual countries or regions**

**A**

ASSISTANCE FOR THE REHABILITATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF LIBERIA

*The General Assembly,*

*Taking note* of Security Council resolution 1020 (1995) of 10 November 1995, in which, *inter alia*, the Council called upon all of the Liberian parties to respect and implement fully and expeditiously all the agreements and commitments they had entered into, in particular with regard to the maintenance of the cease-fire, disarmament and demobilization of combatants, and national reconciliation, as the restoration of peace and democracy in Liberia was primarily the responsibility of those parties which signed the Abuja Agreement on 19 August 1995,<sup>80</sup>

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General of 9 October 1995,<sup>81</sup>

*Deeply concerned* about the adverse effects of the protracted conflict on the socio-economic development of Liberia, and noting the urgent need to restore peace and stability so as to make possible the rehabilitation and reconstruction of basic sectors of the country,

*Recognizing* the recent progress made by the Liberian parties towards the peaceful resolution of the conflict, including the re-establishment of a cease-fire, the installation of a new Council of State on 1 September 1995 and the agreement reached on a timetable for the implementation of the peace process from the cease-fire to the holding of executive and legislative elections in August 1996,

*Noting with concern* that the lack of logistics and security guarantees continues to impair the delivery of relief assistance, particularly in the areas not yet under the control of the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group, thereby hampering the transition from emergency to development activities,

*Commending* the concerted and determined efforts of the Economic Community of West African States to restore peace, security and stability in Liberia,

1. *Expresses its gratitude* to the States and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations that have rendered assistance to the Liberian National Transitional Government in its relief and rehabilitation efforts, and urges that such assistance be continued;

2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his continuing efforts to mobilize relief and rehabilitation assistance for Liberia, expresses its gratitude to him for convening a pledging conference on assistance to Liberia in New York on 27 October 1995, and in this regard encourages States that pledged assistance to fulfil their commitments;

3. *Calls upon* all States and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to continue to provide Liberia with technical, financial and other assistance for the repatriation and resettlement of Liberian refugees, returnees and displaced persons and the rehabilitation of combat-

ants so as to facilitate the restoration of peace and normalcy in Liberia;

4. *Reiterates its appeal* to all States to contribute generously to the Trust Fund for Liberia established by the Secretary-General, *inter alia*, to assist the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group to fulfil its mandate and to provide assistance for the reconstruction of Liberia;

5. *Emphasizes* the urgent need for all parties and factions in Liberia to respect fully the security and safety of all personnel of the United Nations, its specialized agencies, non-governmental organizations and the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group by ensuring their complete freedom of movement throughout Liberia and to take all measures necessary to create an atmosphere conducive to the successful resolution of the conflict;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General:

(a) To continue his efforts to mobilize all possible assistance within the United Nations system to help the Government of Liberia in its reconstruction and development efforts;

(b) To undertake, when conditions permit, in close collaboration with the authorities of Liberia, an overall assessment of needs, with the objective of holding a round-table conference of donors for the reconstruction and development of Liberia;

7. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution;

8. *Decides* to consider at its fifty-first session the question of international assistance for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Liberia.

*89th plenary meeting  
12 December 1995*

**B**

INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE TO AND COOPERATION WITH THE ALLIANCE FOR THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF CENTRAL AMERICA

*The General Assembly,*

*Bearing in mind* the relevant resolutions on the importance of international economic, financial and technical cooperation and assistance during the transition period, a process of peace-keeping and post-conflict peace-building, in particular its resolutions 49/137 and 49/21 I of 19 and 20 December 1994, respectively, which emphasize the compelling need to design a new programme for international economic, financial and technical cooperation and assistance for Central America geared to the new circumstances in the region and based on the priorities established by the Governments of the region,

*Recalling* its resolutions 48/7 of 19 October 1993 and 49/215 A of 23 December 1994 on assistance in mine clearance, and recognizing with concern that the presence of mines and other unexploded devices on Central American territory has social, economic and humanitarian consequences that constitute an obstacle to the restoration of normal conditions for development throughout the region,

*Recalling also* the efforts and aspirations of the peoples and Governments of the isthmus to make Central America a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development,

<sup>80</sup>Official Records of the Security Council, Fiftieth Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1995, document S/1995/742.

<sup>81</sup>A/50/522.

*Recognizing* the valuable and effective contribution made by the United Nations, and by the various governmental and non-governmental mechanisms, towards enabling the Central American peoples fully to achieve their objectives of peace, freedom, democracy and development, and the importance of the political dialogue and economic cooperation taking place within the ministerial conference between the European Union and the Central American countries and the joint initiative of the industrialized countries of the Group of Twenty-four and the countries of the Group of Three as cooperating countries, through the Association for Democracy and Development in Central America and other institutions,

*Taking note with satisfaction* of the very important results achieved by the Programme for Displaced Persons, Refugees and Returnees in Central America (PRODERE) for sustainable social and economic development in Central America, and stressing the relevance of the contribution made by the Programme to the peace process in the region,

*Also taking note with satisfaction* of the report of the Secretary-General on international assistance to and cooperation with the Alliance for the Sustainable Development of Central America,<sup>82</sup> which describes the international cooperation activities implemented since January 1995 in support of the new regional development programme, following the conclusion of the Special Plan of Economic Cooperation for Central America,

*Recognizing* the validity of the Declaration of Commitments in favour of populations affected both by uprootedness and by conflicts and extreme poverty, adopted at Mexico City on 29 June 1994, as well as the functions of lead agency assumed by the United Nations Development Programme, in replacement of the mandate previously carried out by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, which are concentrated in priority social spheres,

*Recognizing also* that, notwithstanding the progress made, it is necessary to continue monitoring the situation in Central America until the underlying structural causes that gave rise to the deep crisis into which the region was plunged have been overcome, and to avoid set-backs in the process and consolidate a firm and lasting peace in Central America,

*Recognizing further* the importance and validity of the commitments assumed by the Central American Presidents from the Esquipulas II summit meeting of 7 August 1987<sup>83</sup> to the present, in particular at the fifteenth summit meeting held at Guácimo, Costa Rica, from 18 to 20 August 1994,<sup>84</sup> the Central American Environment Summit for Sustainable Development held at Managua on 12 and 13 October 1994,<sup>85</sup> the International Conference on Peace and Development in Central America held at Tegucigalpa on 24 and 25 October 1994<sup>86</sup> and the sixteenth summit meeting of

Central American Presidents held in El Salvador in March 1995, at which the priorities of the subregion were set which constitute the framework for the new programme of international assistance and cooperation for Central America,

*Underlining* the establishment of the Alliance for the Sustainable Development of Central America, which constitutes the new comprehensive strategy for national and regional development and defines political, economic, social and environmental priorities, and the signing, at the El Salvador summit meeting on 30 March 1995, of the Treaty on Central American Social Integration,<sup>87</sup> one of the main objectives of which is to increase investment in human capital, and taking into account that the Central American Integration System is the institutional framework that makes it possible to promote integral development in an effective, orderly and coherent manner,

*Taking into consideration* the will of the Central American Presidents to adopt a national and regional strategy entitled "Alliance for the Sustainable Development of Central America"<sup>85</sup> as a comprehensive initiative in the political, moral, economic, social and ecological fields, which includes a redefining of the relations of Central America with the international community and is aimed at improving the well-being of the peoples of the subregion,

1. *Emphasizes* the importance of supporting and strengthening the new programme for international economic, financial and technical cooperation and assistance for Central America geared to the new circumstances in the region and based on the priorities laid down in the Declaration of Commitments adopted by the Follow-up Committee of the International Conference on Central American Refugees and in the new subregional development strategy, the Alliance for the Sustainable Development of Central America;

2. *Notes with satisfaction* the efforts and achievements relating to mine clearance in Central America, and appeals to the organs of the United Nations system and to the international community, and in particular to the Secretary-General, to provide the material, technical and financial support needed by the Central American Governments to complete mine-clearance activities in the region, including those activities among the priorities of the new programme of international assistance to and cooperation with Central America, so as to create improved conditions for promoting the process of reconstruction and sustainable development and, hence, lasting and permanent peace in the region;

3. *Supports* the efforts of the Central American countries in their commitments to the alleviation of extreme poverty and the fostering of sustainable human development, and urges their Governments to continue their efforts to formulate and implement policies and programmes, especially those of a social and environmental character and those relating to investment in human capital;

4. *Stresses* the importance of international economic, financial and technical cooperation and assistance, both bilateral and multilateral, in supporting the efforts of the Central American Governments to implement the new programme for the sustainable development of Central America;

<sup>82</sup>A/50/534.

<sup>83</sup>A/42/521-S/19085, annex; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-second Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1987*, document S/19085.

<sup>84</sup>See A/49/340-S/1994/994, annex; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-ninth Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1994*, document S/1994/994.

<sup>85</sup>See A/49/580-S/1994/1217, annex I; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-ninth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1994*, document S/1994/1217.

<sup>86</sup>See A/49/639-S/1994/1247; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Supplement for October, November and December 1994*, document S/1994/1247.

<sup>87</sup>A/49/901-S/1995/396, annex VII; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Fiftieth Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1995*, document S/1995/396.



5. *Requests* the Secretary-General, the United Nations system and, in particular, the United Nations Development Programme to continue their efforts to mobilize resources in order to put into effect the new strategy for integral development in Central America contained in the Alliance for Sustainable Development and in the Declaration of Commitments, through arrangements that the Central American countries are to determine jointly with the cooperating community;

6. *Urges* all States, intergovernmental organizations, international financial institutions, the organs and specialized agencies of the United Nations system and regional and subregional organizations to continue the necessary support for the implementation of the goals and objectives of the new strategy for integral development in Central America;

7. *Again stresses* the urgent need for the international community to maintain its cooperation with the Central American countries and to provide them with the necessary financial resources, in a sustained manner and on soft terms, where appropriate, with a view to promoting effectively the economic growth and development of the region;

8. *Supports* the decision of the Central American Governments to concentrate their efforts on the implementation of updated programmes with strategies for sustainable human development in previously determined priority areas, which help to consolidate peace and remedy social inequalities, extreme poverty and the social explosion;

9. *Reiterates* that only by solving the political, economic, social and environmental problems that are the cause of tensions and conflicts in society will it be possible to avoid a reversal of the achievements and guarantee a firm and lasting peace in Central America;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session on the implementation of the present resolution;

11. *Decides* to consider at its fifty-second session the question of international assistance to and cooperation with the Alliance for the Sustainable Development of Central America.

*89th plenary meeting  
12 December 1995*

### C

#### ASSISTANCE FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF EL SALVADOR

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* the Security Council resolutions relating to the peace process in El Salvador, and reaffirming its resolutions 47/158 of 18 December 1992, 48/203 of 21 December 1993, 49/21 J of 20 December 1994 and 50/7 of 31 October 1995,

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General of 23 October 1995 on assistance for the reconstruction and development of El Salvador<sup>88</sup> and of 6 October 1995 on the Mission of the United Nations in El Salvador,<sup>8</sup>

*Noting with satisfaction* the renewed expression by the Government of El Salvador and all the political forces involved in the peace process of their political will to implement the remaining commitments under the Chapultepec Agreement,<sup>9</sup> and the efforts to develop programmes and

projects of social benefit aimed at the maintenance and consolidation of peace, democratization and sustainable development,

*Noting* that, in spite of national efforts and the support given by the international community to the implementation of the priority programmes in fulfilment of the Peace Agreement, including the strengthening of democratic institutions, the national reconstruction plan and the economic and social development plan, the implementation of certain programmes and projects basic to the process has continued to be affected by, *inter alia*, the limited availability and the reduction of financial resources in support of the consolidation of peace,

*Recognizing* that El Salvador is at a complex stage in the process of consolidating peace, which calls not only for the implementation of the remaining commitments under the Peace Agreement but also for a new approach involving the implementation and consolidation of medium-term and long-term national development programmes and strategies aimed at resolving the structural problems that are the cause of tension and social instability, and emphasizing the importance and necessity of international technical and financial assistance, both bilateral and multilateral, for the development of those programmes in support of national efforts to achieve the objective of a firm and lasting peace,

*Taking into account* the need to ensure the continuity of the process of democratization and national reconciliation, to complete national reconstruction and to promote sustainable development, as well as the need to strengthen the national machinery which will monitor the consolidation of the peace process before the completion of the mandate of the Mission of the United Nations in El Salvador,

1. *Again expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General and his representatives for their effective and timely participation, to the Group of Friends of the Secretary-General, Colombia, Mexico, Spain and Venezuela, and to the United States of America and other interested States for their contribution to the consolidation of the peace process, democratization and the promotion of economic and social development in El Salvador;

2. *Again expresses its gratitude* to the international community, especially the cooperating community, to the specialized agencies of the United Nations system and to international development and financing institutions, both governmental and non-governmental, for the technical and financial assistance they have provided to El Salvador to complement the effort to consolidate peace and to bring about democracy, reconstruction and national development;

3. *Reaffirms* that the implementation of the remaining commitments of the Peace Agreement, the continuation of programmes of national reconstruction, the strengthening of democratic institutions and the promotion of sustainable development constitute the collective goals, aspirations and needs of the country in overcoming the root causes of the crisis and consolidating peace, democracy and human development;

4. *Urges* the Government of El Salvador and all the political forces involved in the peace process to make every effort to finish complying with the remaining commitments of the Peace Agreement and to continue to develop medium-term and long-term national programmes and strategies, particularly social welfare projects, designed to

<sup>88</sup>A/50/455.

improve the lives of the most vulnerable segments of the population;

5. *Encourages* the international community, in particular the donor community and international institutions of the United Nations system active in the field of development, cooperation and financing, to continue to contribute to the consolidation of peace in El Salvador by responding flexibly and generously with sufficient resources in support of the efforts of the Government of El Salvador effectively to promote and achieve the aspirations and objectives of the people of El Salvador, in accordance with the spirit of the Peace Agreement;

6. *Again invites* the international financial organizations to work with the Government of El Salvador in considering measures to harmonize the economic adjustment and stabilization programmes with the priority programmes of the national reconstruction plan and the economic and social development plan targeting the population affected by the conflict and the most vulnerable segments of Salvadoran society;

7. *Again requests* the Secretary-General to take the necessary measures and make every possible effort to mobilize the material and financial resources needed to meet the requirements of the priority programmes in El Salvador that are critical to the successful outcome and consolidation of the peace process;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session on the implementation of the present resolution, and decides to consider at that session the question of assistance for the reconstruction and development of El Salvador.

89th plenary meeting  
12 December 1995

#### D

#### INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE FOR THE ECONOMIC REHABILITATION OF ANGOLA

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its previous resolutions appealing to the international community to continue to render material, technical and financial assistance for the economic rehabilitation of Angola,

*Recalling also* that the Security Council, in its resolutions 922 (1994) of 31 May 1994, 932 (1994) of 30 June 1994, 945 (1994) of 29 September 1994, 952 (1994) of 27 October 1994, 966 (1994) of 8 December 1994, 976 (1995) of 8 February 1995 and 1008 (1995) of 7 August 1995, in the presidential statements on Angola of 11 May 1995<sup>89</sup> and 12 October 1995,<sup>90</sup> and in other resolutions on international assistance for the economic rehabilitation of Angola, had, *inter alia*, requested the international community to render assistance to Angola,

*Deeply concerned* about the critical economic and social situation prevailing in Angola, aggravated by the tremendous consequences of war which have destroyed the economic and social infrastructure,

*Stressing* the fact that the ongoing implementation of the peace agreements, including the Lusaka Protocol,<sup>36</sup> will foster peace and stability, thus creating favourable condi-

tions for the economic and social rehabilitation of the country,

*Welcoming* the results of the first Round-Table Conference of Donors, held at Brussels from 25 to 27 September 1995, conducted in a spirit of reconciliation and intended to mobilize funds for the Community Rehabilitation and National Reconciliation Programme, and aware of the important role to be played by the international community in assisting Angola in rehabilitating its economy and its basic and social infrastructures, as well as the development of human resources,

*Recognizing* that the social and economic reintegration of demobilized combatants is essential for the establishment of lasting peace and sustainable development in Angola,

*Stressing* the need to strengthen the process of demining of all roads, as well as areas of productive activities, by means of appropriate international assistance and the continued commitment of all parties in Angola,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General of 12 September 1995;<sup>91</sup>

2. *Calls upon* all parties to do their utmost to achieve the full and effective implementation of the Peace Accords for Angola<sup>35</sup> in order to bring peace and stability to Angola, thus creating conditions conducive to its economic rehabilitation;

3. *Expresses its appreciation* to all States, United Nations organizations and other donors for the substantial humanitarian assistance rendered to Angola during the last two years, and appeals for continued and generous contributions in support of humanitarian activities facilitating the current transition to peace;

4. *Appeals* to all Governments and international and private institutions that announced their contributions at the Round-Table Conference of Donors to honour their commitments, and encourages the Government of Angola to proceed with its programme of economic rehabilitation, including through the implementation of the Community Rehabilitation and National Reconciliation Programme, and to overcome its social, economic and financial crisis;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in cooperation with the international community, to continue to mobilize organizations and organs of the United Nations system in order to ensure an appropriate level of economic assistance for Angola;

6. *Commends* all Governments, non-governmental organizations and United Nations specialized agencies involved in the mine-action programme in Angola, and requests the international community to consider increasing its support in this domain;

7. *Urges* Member States and other donors to provide support for the programme of demobilization and reintegration of excess combatants, as outlined in the appeal issued by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat in July 1995;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session on the implementation of the present resolution;

9. *Decides* to review at its fifty-second session the question of international assistance for the economic rehabilitation of Angola.

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<sup>89</sup>Official Records of the Security Council, Fiftieth Year, Resolutions and Decisions of the Security Council, 1995, document S/PRST/1995/27.

<sup>90</sup>Ibid., document S/PRST/1995/51.

<sup>91</sup>A/50/424.

## E

ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO STATES AFFECTED BY THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS IMPOSING SANCTIONS AGAINST THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA (SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO)

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* the provisions of Articles 25, 48, 49 and 50 of the Charter of the United Nations,

*Recalling also* Security Council resolution 843 (1993) of 18 June 1993, in which the Council entrusted the Committee established pursuant to its resolution 724 (1991) of 15 December 1991 with the task of examining requests by Member States for assistance under the provisions of Article 50 of the Charter, and the recommendations of the Committee in response to requests for assistance addressed to the Council by certain States confronting special economic problems arising from the implementation of Council trade and economic sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro),

*Recalling further* Security Council resolution 943 (1994) of 23 September 1994, in which the Council invited the Committee established pursuant to resolution 724 (1991) to adopt appropriate streamlined procedures for expediting its consideration of applications concerning legitimate humanitarian assistance,

*Expressing its appreciation* that in the last few months the Committee established pursuant to resolution 724 (1991) has undertaken measures aimed at improving and accelerating the processing of applications put forward to the Committee,

*Reaffirming* its resolutions 48/210 of 21 December 1993 and 49/21 A of 2 December 1994 on economic assistance to States affected by the implementation of the Security Council resolutions imposing sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro),

*Taking note* of the letter on behalf of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of five States directly affected addressed to the Secretary-General<sup>92</sup> and in particular the proposals for taking concrete steps contained therein,

*Commending* the efforts of the international financial institutions, other international organizations and those States that responded to the appeal of the Secretary-General by taking into consideration the special economic problems arising from the implementation of the sanctions in their support programmes to the affected States,

*Commending also* the continuing attention by the inter-governmental and regional organizations, in particular the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the European Union, as well as through the Central European Initiative, to the needs of the affected States for assistance in developing regional transport and communication infrastructures,

*Taking note* of the report of the Secretary-General of 25 January 1995 entitled "Supplement to An Agenda for Peace: position paper of the Secretary-General on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations",<sup>30</sup> in particular its chapter III.E, on the issue of United Nations sanctions,

*Taking note also* of the report of the Secretary-General of 12 September 1995 on the implementation of resolution

<sup>92</sup>A/50/189-S/1995/412; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Fiftieth Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1995*, document S/1995/412.

49/21 A<sup>93</sup> and, in particular, of the conclusions and recommendations contained therein,

1. *Commends* the States bordering on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), the other Danube riparian States and all other States for the measures they have taken to comply with Security Council resolutions 713 (1991) of 25 September 1991, 757 (1992) of 30 May 1992, 760 (1992) of 18 June 1992, 787 (1992) of 16 November 1992, 820 (1993) of 17 April 1993 and 1021 (1995) and 1022 (1995) of 22 November 1995, and urges all States to continue to observe those resolutions strictly;

2. *Expresses concern* at the persisting special economic problems confronting States, in particular the States that border the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), the other Danube riparian States and all other States adversely affected by the severance of their economic relations with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and the disruption of traditional transport and communications links in that part of Europe and their long-term adverse impact on the economies of those States;

3. *Reaffirms* the urgent need of a concerted response from the international community to deal in a more effective manner with the special economic problems of the affected States in view of their magnitude and the adverse impact of the sanctions on those States;

4. *Renews its invitation* to the international financial institutions, in particular the International Monetary Fund, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, to continue to pay special attention to the economic problems of the affected States and their adverse social impact and to consider ways and means for mobilizing and providing resources on appropriate terms for mitigating the continuing negative impact of the sanctions on the efforts of the affected States for financial stabilization as well as for development of regional transport and communications infrastructure;

5. *Renews its request* to the competent organs, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system to take into consideration, in programming their development activities, the special needs of the affected States and to consider providing assistance to them from their special programme resources;

6. *Renews its appeal* to all States, on an urgent basis, to provide technical, financial and material assistance to the affected States to mitigate the adverse impact of the sanctions on their economies, *inter alia*, through the consideration of measures for the promotion of exports of the affected countries and for the promotion of investments in their economies;

7. *Encourages* the States of the region affected by the implementation of the Security Council resolutions imposing sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) to continue, *inter alia*, to cooperate actively on a regional basis in such fields as cross-border infrastructure projects or promotion of trade, thus alleviating the adverse impact of the sanctions;

8. *Urges* the organizations and specialized agencies of the United Nations system rendering humanitarian assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), including material

<sup>93</sup>A/50/423.

and food supply for the United Nations Protection Force and other United Nations peace-keeping contingents, to take appropriate steps to broaden access for suppliers, particularly from the States affected by the implementation of the Security Council mandatory sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro);

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take all appropriate measures to increase the opportunity for countries affected by the sanctions to participate actively in the post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation of the crisis-stricken areas of former Yugoslavia after the achievement of a peaceful, lasting and just political solution of the conflict in the Balkans;

10. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to continue to seek on a regular basis information from States and regional organizations and the concerned organs and agencies of the United Nations system on action taken to alleviate the special economic problems of those States and to report thereon to the Security Council, as well as to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session a report on the implementation of the present resolution.

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F

ASSISTANCE FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION AND  
DEVELOPMENT OF DJIBOUTI

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 49/21 F of 20 December 1994 and its previous resolutions on economic assistance to Djibouti,

*Recalling also* the Paris Declaration and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s,<sup>94</sup> adopted by the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries on 14 September 1990, as well as the mutual commitments undertaken on that occasion and the importance attached to the follow-up to that Conference,

*Distressed* by the large number of persons afflicted by the torrential rains and unprecedented flooding in Djibouti in November 1994 and by the significant damage and devastation to property and infrastructure,

*Noting* that the economic and social development efforts of Djibouti, which is included in the list of least developed countries, are constrained by the extremes of the local climate, in particular cyclical droughts and torrential rains and floods such as those which occurred in 1989 and 1994, and that the implementation of reconstruction and development programmes, as well as of the demobilization programme, requires the deployment of substantial resources which exceed the real capacity of the country,

*Noting with concern* that the situation in Djibouti has been made worse by the deteriorating situation in the Horn of Africa and in particular in Somalia, and noting the presence of over 100,000 refugees and persons displaced from their countries, which has, on the one hand, placed serious strains on the fragile economic, social and administrative infrastructure of Djibouti and, on the other, caused serious security problems in the country,

*Noting also* the difficult economic and financial situation of Djibouti resulting in part from the number of pri-

ority development projects that have had to be suspended in view of serious developments in the international situation and in part from the prolonged effects of the previous regional conflicts, notably in Somalia, which have disrupted services, transport and trade and which are draining the State of most of its revenues,

*Noting with satisfaction* the progress made by the Government of Djibouti and the International Monetary Fund on the negotiations concerning the structural adjustment programme, and convinced of the necessity to support that financial recovery programme and to take effective measures to alleviate the consequences, in particular the social consequences, of that adjustment policy, which is in the course of implementation, in order that the country may achieve appreciable economic results in the context of the programme,

*Noting with appreciation* the efforts of the United Nations Inter-Agency Assessment Mission to Djibouti organized in April 1994 and led by the United Nations Development Programme, and having considered its recommendations in the light of the new realities of the country,

*Noting with gratitude* the support provided to relief and rehabilitation operations by various countries and by inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations,

*Taking note* of the report of the Secretary-General of 26 July 1995,<sup>95</sup>

1. *Declares its solidarity* with the Government and people of Djibouti in the face of the devastating consequences of the torrential rains and floods and the new economic realities of Djibouti, resulting in particular from the continuing critical situation in the Horn of Africa, especially in Somalia;

2. *Welcomes* the progress made by the Government of Djibouti and the International Monetary Fund on the negotiations concerning the structural adjustment programme, and in that context appeals to all Governments, international financial institutions, the specialized agencies of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations to respond in an appropriate manner, as a matter of urgency, to the financial and material needs of the country;

3. *Considers* that implementation of the demobilization programme and of the national rehabilitation plan and reinforcement of democratic institutions require appropriate assistance in the form of financial and material support;

4. *Requests* a review of the recommendations of the United Nations Inter-Agency Assessment Mission to Djibouti with a view to their implementation;

5. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his efforts to make the international community aware of the difficulties faced by Djibouti;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to mobilize the resources necessary for an effective programme of financial, technical and material assistance to Djibouti;

7. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to prepare a study of the progress made with economic assistance to Djibouti, in time for the question to be considered by the General Assembly at its fifty-first session.

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<sup>94</sup>A/CONF.147/18, part one.

<sup>95</sup>A/50/311.

## G

## ASSISTANCE FOR HUMANITARIAN RELIEF AND THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL REHABILITATION OF SOMALIA

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolutions 43/206 of 20 December 1988, 44/178 of 19 December 1989, 45/229 of 21 December 1990, 46/176 of 19 December 1991, 47/160 of 18 December 1992, 48/201 of 21 December 1993 and 49/21 L of 20 December 1994 and the resolutions and decisions of the Economic and Social Council on emergency assistance to Somalia,

*Recalling also* Security Council resolution 733 (1992) of 23 January 1992 and all subsequent relevant resolutions, in which the Council, *inter alia*, urged all parties, movements and factions in Somalia to facilitate the efforts of the United Nations, its specialized agencies and humanitarian organizations to provide urgent humanitarian assistance to the affected population in Somalia and reiterated the call for the full respect of the security and safety of the personnel of those organizations and the guarantee of their complete freedom of movement in and around Mogadishu and other parts of Somalia,

*Recalling in particular* Security Council resolution 954 (1994) of 4 November 1994, in which the Council, *inter alia*, decided to withdraw all the forces of the United Nations Operation in Somalia II before 31 March 1995 and expressed its confidence in the willingness of the United Nations to remain ready to provide, through its various agencies, rehabilitation and reconstruction assistance,

*Taking note* of the presidential statement of 6 April 1995,<sup>96</sup> in which the Security Council, *inter alia*, noted the successful conclusion of the withdrawal from Somalia of the forces of the United Nations Operation in Somalia II and welcomed the willingness expressed by the international humanitarian agencies and the non-governmental organizations to continue to provide rehabilitation and reconstruction assistance in areas where security is guaranteed by the Somalis,

*Noting* the cooperation between the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity, the League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the countries of the Horn of Africa and the States members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries in their efforts to resolve the humanitarian, security and political crisis in Somalia,

*Noting with appreciation* the continued efforts made by the Secretary-General to assist the Somali people in their efforts to promote peace, stability and national reconciliation,

*Noting with concern* that the political instability and the absence of central authority that continue to characterize Somalia provide a breeding ground for new emergencies,

*Reaffirming* the importance it attaches to the need for effective coordination and cooperation among the United Nations agencies and their partners since the withdrawal of the United Nations Operation in Somalia in March 1995,

*Taking note* of the report of the Secretary-General of 19 September 1995 on assistance for humanitarian relief and the economic and social rehabilitation of Somalia,<sup>97</sup>

<sup>96</sup>Official Records of the Security Council, Fiftieth Year, Resolutions and Decisions of the Security Council, 1995, document S/PRST/1995/15.

<sup>97</sup>A/50/447.

*Deeply appreciative* of the humanitarian assistance and rehabilitation support rendered by a number of States to alleviate the hardship and suffering of the affected Somali population,

*Noting with appreciation* that, following the departure of the United Nations Operation in Somalia and despite the ongoing difficulties, the country is slowly moving towards recovery and reconstruction,

*Recognizing* that, while the humanitarian situation remains fragile, there is a need to undertake efforts to begin the process of rehabilitation and reconstruction alongside the process of national reconciliation, without prejudice to the provision of emergency relief assistance wherever and whenever required, as the security situation allows,

*Re-emphasizing* the importance of the further implementation of its resolution 47/160 to rehabilitate basic social and economic services at local and regional levels throughout the country,

1. *Expresses its gratitude* to all States and the intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations that have responded to the appeals of the Secretary-General and others by extending assistance to Somalia;

2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his continued and tireless efforts to mobilize assistance to the Somali people;

3. *Welcomes* the ongoing efforts of the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity, the League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the countries of the Horn of Africa and the States members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries to resolve the situation in Somalia;

4. *Also welcomes* the current strategy of the United Nations focusing on the implementation of community-based interventions aimed at rebuilding local infrastructures and increasing the self-reliance of the local population, as well as the ongoing efforts by the United Nations agencies and their partner organizations to establish and maintain close coordination and cooperation mechanisms for relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction in the period following the departure of the United Nations Operation in Somalia;

5. *Urges* all States and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to continue the further implementation of resolution 47/160 in order to assist the Somali people in embarking on the rehabilitation of basic social and economic services as well as institution-building aimed at the restoration of civil administration at the local level in all those parts of the country where peace, security and stability prevail;

6. *Appeals* to all the Somali parties concerned to terminate hostilities and to engage in a national reconciliation process that will allow for the transition from relief to reconstruction and development;

7. *Calls upon* all parties, movements and factions in Somalia to respect fully the security and safety of personnel of the United Nations and its specialized agencies and of non-governmental organizations and to guarantee their complete freedom of movement throughout Somalia;

8. *Calls upon* the Secretary-General to continue to mobilize international humanitarian, rehabilitation and reconstruction assistance for Somalia;

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in view of the critical situation in Somalia, to take all measures necessary for the implementation of the present resolution, to apprise the

Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1996 of the progress made and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session.

*96th plenary meeting  
20 December 1995*

## H

### ASSISTANCE TO THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling its resolution 49/21 N of 20 December 1994,*

*Recalling also previous resolutions on the question,*

*Welcoming the signing at Cairo on 4 May 1994 by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, of the first implementation agreement of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements,<sup>45</sup> namely the Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area,<sup>46</sup> the Agreement on the Preparatory Transfer of Powers and Responsibilities of 29 August 1994, and the Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip of 28 September 1995,*

*Gravely concerned about the difficult economic and employment conditions facing the Palestinian people throughout the Occupied Territory,*

*Conscious of the urgent need for improvement in the economic and social infrastructure of the Occupied Territory and the living conditions of the Palestinian people,*

*Aware that development is difficult under occupation and best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,*

*Noting, in the light of the recent developments in the peace process, the great economic and social challenges and needs facing the Palestinian people and their leadership,*

*Conscious of the urgent necessity for international assistance to the Palestinian people, taking into account the Palestinian priorities,*

*Noting the convening of the United Nations Seminar on Palestinian Administrative, Managerial and Financial Needs and Challenges in the light of the new developments, held at the headquarters of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization from 28 to 30 June 1995,*

*Welcoming the signing of the agreements between the Palestine Liberation Organization and the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the International Labour Organization,*

*Stressing the need for the full engagement of the United Nations in the process of building Palestinian institutions and in providing broad assistance to the Palestinian people, including assistance in the fields of elections, police training and public administration,*

*Noting the appointment by the Secretary-General in June 1994 of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories,*

*Welcoming the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington on 1 October 1993, and the establishment of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee and the work being done by the World Bank as its secretariat, as well as the establishment of the consultative group and the convening of an international conference on*

*economic assistance to the Palestinian people to be held in Paris,*

*Welcoming also the results of the meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee on 29 and 30 November 1994 at Brussels, and on 27 April 1995 in Paris,*

*Having considered the report of the Secretary-General of 13 July 1995,<sup>98</sup>*

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;

2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his rapid response and efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people;

3. *Also expresses its appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people;

4. *Stresses* the importance of the appointment of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the Occupied Territories;

5. *Urges* Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people in order to assist in the development of the West Bank and Gaza, and to do so in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions;

6. *Calls upon* relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in accordance with the Palestinian priorities set forth by the Palestinian Authority, with emphasis on national execution and capacity-building;

7. *Urges* Member States to open their markets to exports from the West Bank and Gaza and on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules;

8. *Calls upon* the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs;

9. *Suggests* the convening in 1996 of a United Nations-sponsored seminar on building the Palestinian economy;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution, containing:

(a) An assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people;

(b) An assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them;

11. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-first session, under the item entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance", the sub-item entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people".

*96th plenary meeting  
20 December 1995*

<sup>98</sup>A/50/286-E/1995/113.

## I

ASSISTANCE FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION OF MADAGASCAR  
FOLLOWING THE NATURAL DISASTERS OF 1994

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 48/234 of 14 February 1994,

*Recalling also* Economic and Social Council resolutions 1994/36 of 29 July 1994 and 1995/43 of 27 July 1995,

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General of 14 July 1995 relating to the implementation of resolution 48/234<sup>99</sup> and in particular the conclusions reached therein,

*Noting with concern* that, despite the efforts made by the Government of Madagascar and by the international community, in particular the organizations of the United Nations system, the resources mobilized are still inadequate, and that Madagascar remains vulnerable to the impact of natural disasters,

*Noting* that the implementation of the programmes for disaster prevention and for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the areas affected by natural disasters requires the mobilization of substantial resources that are beyond the country's real means,

*Noting also* that each country has responsibility for natural disaster prevention and that reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts will be enhanced by continuing national development efforts,

*Considering* that Madagascar's sustainable development requires a long-term capacity to prepare for and prevent disasters and to overcome the residual effects of these repeated climatic phenomena, and recognizing that the assistance provided should take this into account,

1. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General and the international community, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat and the United Nations Development Programme for the efforts they have made to supplement the action of the Government of Madagascar in the implementation of programmes for disaster prevention and for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the areas and sectors affected by natural disasters;

2. *Urges* all States and governmental and non-governmental organizations, together with United Nations organizations, programmes and specialized agencies, in particular the international financial institutions, to increase their support to the Government of Madagascar with a view to preventing disasters and mitigating their effects on Madagascar's development process;

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to mobilize the necessary resources to assist the Government of Madagascar in the reconstruction of Madagascar;

4. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

96th plenary meeting  
20 December 1995

## J

## EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE TO THE SUDAN

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolutions 43/8 of 18 October 1988, 43/52 of 6 December 1988, 44/12 of 24 October 1989, 45/226 of

<sup>99</sup>A/50/292-E/1995/115.

21 December 1990, 46/178 of 19 December 1991, 47/162 of 18 December 1992, 48/200 of 21 December 1993 and 49/21 K of 20 December 1994 on assistance to the Sudan,

*Noting* that, despite the progress made in Operation Lifeline Sudan, considerable relief needs still remain to be addressed, particularly in the areas of non-food assistance, including assistance to combat malaria and for logistics, emergency recovery, rehabilitation and development,

*Taking note* of the ongoing review of Operation Lifeline Sudan, intended to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the operation since its launching in 1989,

*Recognizing* the need in emergency situations to address the continuum of relief, rehabilitation and development so as to reduce dependence on external food aid and other relief services,

*Taking note* of the report of the Secretary-General of 22 September 1995 on emergency assistance to the Sudan<sup>100</sup> and of the statement made by the representative of the Sudan before the General Assembly on 27 November 1995,<sup>101</sup>

1. *Acknowledges* the cooperation by the Government of the Sudan with the United Nations, including the agreements and arrangements achieved to facilitate relief operations through improvement of United Nations assistance to affected areas, and encourages the Government of the Sudan to continue its cooperation in this regard;

2. *Stresses* the need for the ongoing review of Operation Lifeline Sudan to assess the effectiveness and the efficiency of the operation, as well as its transparency, and for the involvement of the Government of the Sudan in its operation;

3. *Calls upon* the international community to continue to contribute generously to the emergency needs, recovery and development of the country.

4. *Calls upon* the donor community and the United Nations system to provide financial, technical and medical assistance, guided by the actions called for by the General Assembly, in its relevant resolutions, to combat malaria in the Sudan;

5. *Appeals* to all parties concerned to continue to pursue dialogue and negotiations and to terminate hostilities so as to allow for the re-establishment of peace, order and stability, and also to facilitate relief efforts;

6. *Stresses* the importance of assuring safe access for personnel providing relief assistance to all in need;

7. *Urges* all parties involved to continue to offer all feasible assistance, including facilitating the movement of relief supplies and personnel, so as to guarantee maximum success of Operation Lifeline Sudan in all parts of the country;

8. *Stresses also* that Operation Lifeline Sudan should operate within the principle of national sovereignty and the framework of international cooperation in accordance with relevant international law;

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to mobilize and coordinate resources and support for Operation Lifeline Sudan, to assess the emergency situation in the country and to report thereon, as well as on the recovery and rehabilitation of the country, to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session.

98th plenary meeting  
22 December 1995

<sup>100</sup>A/50/464.

<sup>101</sup>See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth Session, Plenary Meetings, 70th meeting, and corrigendum.*



## K

## SPECIAL EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FOR THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND RECONSTRUCTION OF BURUNDI

*The General Assembly,*

Recalling its resolutions 48/17 of 3 November 1993, 49/7 of 25 October 1994 and 49/21 C of 2 December 1994,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General of 11 October 1995,<sup>102</sup>

Considering that Burundi continues to face a social, human rights and political crisis that has existed since October 1993, the adverse effects of which are endangering the national economy, as evidenced by the destruction of economic and social infrastructures, declining production and trade and, as a result, shrinking public revenue,

Concerned about the instability of the situation in a number of areas, and acknowledging the need to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian and other international personnel,

Concerned also about the acts of violence that have the negative effect of stifling the national economy, in particular by disturbing the movement of persons, goods and services,

Recognizing that the coalition Government that emerged from the Convention on Governance<sup>103</sup> is making efforts to redress the economic and social situation through its plan of action of March 1995,

Convinced that the country has the capacity to achieve appreciable economic results, particularly through its structural adjustment programme, and that an improved economic situation would contribute to the consolidation of peace,

Bearing in mind, however, that, in view of Burundi's inadequate economic and financial resources, the continued and increased assistance of the international community is still essential for the implementation of the plans and programmes of the Government,

1. Expresses its gratitude to all States, United Nations institutions and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations that responded favourably to the appeal made at the forty-ninth session;

2. Invites once again all States, United Nations institutions and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to continue to provide Burundi with economic, financial, material and technical assistance for economic recovery and for the reconstruction of the various infrastructures destroyed or damaged during the crisis and to facilitate the voluntary repatriation of refugees;

3. Calls upon all parties not to hinder in any way efforts by international, intergovernmental and non-governmental aid organizations to transport and distribute humanitarian assistance to the people of Burundi and to take all necessary measures to ensure the safety and security of all humanitarian personnel operating in the country;

4. Requests the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in close cooperation with the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, to coordinate the activities being implemented by the United Nations system to

meet the needs of the people of Burundi adequately and to mobilize the assistance of the international community;

5. Requests the Government of Burundi to continue its efforts geared towards the achievement of national reconciliation and the maintenance of lasting peace, *inter alia*, through adherence to the principles of the Convention on Governance, provisions that are essential for the successful and sustainable implementation of humanitarian aid and economic, financial, material and technical assistance to the people of Burundi;

6. Calls upon the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session on the implementation of the present resolution;

7. Decides to consider at its fifty-first session the question of special emergency assistance for the economic recovery and reconstruction of Burundi.

98th plenary meeting  
22 December 1995

## L

## SITUATION IN RWANDA: INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE FOR A SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF REFUGEES, THE RESTORATION OF TOTAL PEACE, RECONSTRUCTION AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN RWANDA

*The General Assembly,*

Recalling its resolutions 48/211 of 21 December 1993, entitled "Emergency assistance for the socio-economic rehabilitation of Rwanda", and 49/23 of 2 December 1994, entitled "Emergency international assistance for a solution to the problem of refugees, the restoration of total peace, reconstruction and socio-economic development in war-stricken Rwanda",

Recalling also Security Council resolution 1029 (1995) of 12 December 1995 concerning the final extension of the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda and calling upon States and donor agencies to fulfil their earlier commitments to give assistance for Rwanda's rehabilitation efforts, to increase such assistance and in particular to support the early and effective functioning of the International Tribunal for Rwanda and the rehabilitation of the Rwandan judicial system,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General of 1 December 1995<sup>104</sup> and of the statement by the President of the Security Council of 17 October 1995<sup>105</sup> in connection with the consideration by the Council of the item entitled "The situation concerning Rwanda",

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General of 19 October 1995 on emergency international assistance for a solution to the problem of refugees, the restoration of total peace, reconstruction and socio-economic development in war-stricken Rwanda,<sup>106</sup>

Taking into consideration the serious consequences of genocide and other mass killings and of the destruction of the economic, social, educational and administrative infrastructure,

Expressing its grave concern over the disastrous humanitarian situation of the Rwandan population, including

<sup>104</sup>Official Records of the Security Council, Fiftieth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1995, document S/1995/1002.

<sup>105</sup>Ibid., Resolutions and Decisions of the Security Council, 1995, document S/PRST/1995/53.

<sup>106</sup>A/50/654.

<sup>102</sup>A/50/541 and Add.1.

<sup>103</sup>A/50/94-S/1995/190, annex; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Fiftieth Year, Supplement for January, February and March 1995*, document S/1995/190.



1.6 million refugees who need to be reintegrated into society and employment, and noting that several categories of refugees are also involved,

*Welcoming* the summit of heads of State of the Great Lakes region, held at Cairo on 28 and 29 November 1995, and their declaration of 29 November 1995,<sup>107</sup> and noting the United Nations support for all efforts to reduce tension and restore stability in the Great Lakes region, in particular implementation of the Cairo Declaration on the Great Lakes Region and other previously adopted commitments, and for continuing consultations with the aim of convening a conference on security, stability and development in the Great Lakes region, as appropriate,

*Emphasizing* the need to consider the crisis in Rwanda in a regional context, in view of its implications for the countries of the region, through the implementation of the plan of action recommended by the Government of Rwanda, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Organization of African Unity within the framework of the Peace Agreement between the Government of the Rwandese Republic and the Rwandese Patriotic Front, signed at Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, on 4 August 1993,<sup>108</sup>

*Conscious* that technical assistance and advisory services will assist the Government of Rwanda in reconstructing the social, legal and economic infrastructure, and that extensive assistance is required for this,

*Recognizing* that the Arusha Peace Agreement provides an appropriate framework for national reconciliation,

*Expressing its gratitude* to those States and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations which have responded positively and continue to respond positively to the humanitarian and development needs of Rwanda, and to the Secretary-General, who has mobilized and coordinated the distribution of humanitarian assistance,

1. *Encourages* the Government of Rwanda to pursue its efforts with a view to creating conditions that would be conducive to the return of the refugees to their country and their resettlement and to the recovery by displaced persons of their property in peace, security and dignity;

2. *Congratulates* the Secretary-General on the efforts he has made to draw the attention of the international community to the humanitarian situation in Rwanda, requests him to provide all possible assistance and encourages him and his Special Representative to continue to coordinate the activities of the United Nations in Rwanda, including those of the organizations and agencies active in the humanitarian and developmental field and of the human rights officers;

3. *Welcomes* the increased commitments and funds pledged for the Government's Programme of National Reconciliation and Socio-Economic Rehabilitation and Recovery, and calls on the international community to continue to support Rwanda's rehabilitation process and to translate these pledges into urgent concrete assistance;

4. *Also welcomes* the commitment of the Government of Rwanda to cooperate with and to take all necessary

measures to ensure the safety and security of all humanitarian personnel, including personnel of non-governmental organizations, operating in the country;

5. *Urges* all States, United Nations organizations, specialized agencies and other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and the international financial and development institutions to continue to provide all possible financial, technical and material assistance, bearing in mind that sound economic foundations are vital for achieving lasting stability in Rwanda and for the return and resettlement of Rwandan refugees;

6. *Calls upon* the international community to continue its assistance with a view to alleviating the intolerable conditions in Rwandan prisons and to expediting the processing of cases, and encourages the Government of Rwanda to continue its efforts to improve the situation in the prisons and to expedite the processing of cases;

7. *Welcomes* the indictments recently issued by the International Tribunal for Rwanda, calls upon all States to cooperate with the Tribunal, in accordance with Security Council resolutions 955 (1994) of 8 November 1994 and 978 (1995) of 27 February 1995, by arresting and detaining persons suspected of genocide and other serious violations of international humanitarian law, and encourages the Government of Rwanda to work cooperatively with the Secretary-General and the Tribunal to establish an effective protective force for the Tribunal;

8. *Urges* all States, in particular donor countries, to contribute generously to the trust fund established by the Secretary-General on 14 July 1994 to finance humanitarian relief and rehabilitation programmes to be implemented in Rwanda;

9. *Calls upon* all States to act in accordance with the recommendations adopted by the Nairobi Summit of January 1995 and the Regional Conference on Assistance to Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in the Great Lakes Region, held at Bujumbura in February 1995, and with those contained in the Cairo Declaration, and to continue efforts with regard to the search for peace in the Great Lakes region;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to consult with the Government of Rwanda and with the relevant United Nations agencies on the nature of a continued United Nations presence in Rwanda after 8 March 1996<sup>109</sup> and on the role such a United Nations presence might play in furthering the search for peace and stability through justice, reconciliation and refugee return and in assisting the Government of Rwanda in its pressing task of rehabilitation and reconstruction, and to report to the General Assembly by 1 February 1996 on the results of those consultations in addition to submitting to the Assembly at its fifty-first session a report on the implementation of the present resolution;

11. *Decides* to consider at its fifty-first session the question of the situation in Rwanda: international assistance for a solution to the problem of refugees, the restoration of total peace, reconstruction and socio-economic development in Rwanda.

98th plenary meeting  
22 December 1995

<sup>107</sup>Official Records of the Security Council, Fiftieth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1995, document S/1995/1001.

<sup>108</sup>A/48/824-S/26915, annexes I-VII; see Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-eighth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1993, document S/26915.

<sup>109</sup>See Official Records of the Security Council, Fiftieth Year, Resolutions and Decisions of the Security Council, 1995, resolution 1029 (1995).

United Nations system where appropriate, to promote awareness of landmines, especially among children;

4. *Expresses its appreciation* to Member States and regional organizations for their financial contributions to the Trust Fund, and appeals to them to continue this support through further contributions;

5. *Encourages* all relevant multilateral and national programmes and bodies to include, in coordination with the United Nations, activities related to mine clearance in their humanitarian, social and economic assistance activities;

6. *Stresses* the importance of international assistance for the rehabilitation of landmine victims and their full participation in society;

7. *Emphasizes again*, in this connection, the importance of effective coordination by the United Nations of activities related to mine clearance, including those by regional organizations, in particular activities related to standards, technological development, information and training;

8. *Welcomes* the efforts of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs to coordinate mine-related activities and, in particular, the establishment, in cooperation with other relevant United Nations organizations, of comprehensive mine-action programmes, and encourages the Department to continue and enhance those efforts with a view to improving the effectiveness of assistance in mine clearance by the United Nations;

9. *Also welcomes* the designation of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, the focal point in the United Nations for coordinating humanitarian demining and related issues, as the repository of information and for encouraging and facilitating international research to improve mine-clearance methods;

10. *Urges* Member States, regional organizations, governmental and non-governmental organizations and foundations to continue to extend full assistance and cooperation to the Secretary-General and, in particular, to provide him with information and data as well as other appropriate resources that could be useful in strengthening the coordination role of the United Nations in the field of mine awareness, training, surveying, mine detection and clearance, scientific research on mine-detection and clearance technology, and information on and distribution of medical equipment and supplies;

11. *Calls upon* Member States, especially those that have a capacity to do so, to provide the necessary information and technical and material assistance, as appropriate, and to locate, remove, destroy or otherwise render ineffective minefields, mines, booby-traps and other devices in accordance with international law;

12. *Urges* Member States and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and foundations that have the ability to do so, to provide, as appropriate, technological assistance to mine-inflicted countries and to promote scientific research and development on humanitarian mine-clearance techniques and technology so that mine-clearance activities

may be carried out more effectively at lower costs and through safer means and to promote international collaboration in this regard;

13. *Encourages* Member States and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and foundations to continue to support ongoing activities to promote appropriate technology, as well as international operational and safety standards for humanitarian mine-clearance activities, including the early follow-up of the International Conference on Mine Clearance Technology;<sup>131</sup>

14. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session a report on the progress achieved on all relevant issues outlined in his previous reports to the Assembly on assistance in mine clearance and in the present resolution and on the operation of the Trust Fund;

15. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-second session the item entitled "Assistance in mine clearance".

84th plenary meeting  
13 December 1996

#### 51/150. Assistance to the Palestinian people

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 50/58 H of 20 December 1995,

*Recalling also* previous resolutions on the question,

*Welcoming* the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements of 1993 between the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,<sup>134</sup> as well as the signing of the subsequent implementation agreements, including the Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip of 1995,

*Gravely concerned* about the difficult economic and employment conditions facing the Palestinian people throughout the occupied territory,

*Conscious* of the urgent need for improvement in the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied territory and the living conditions of the Palestinian people,

*Aware* that development is difficult under occupation and best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

*Noting*, in the light of the recent developments in the peace process, the great economic and social challenges facing the Palestinian people and their leadership,

*Conscious* of the urgent necessity for international assistance to the Palestinian people, taking into account the Palestinian priorities,

<sup>134</sup> A/48/486-S/26560, annex; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-eighth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1993*, document S/26560.

Noting the convening of the United Nations Seminar on Assistance to the Palestinian People, "Building the Palestinian Economy - Challenges and Prospects",<sup>135</sup> held at Cairo from 21 to 23 May 1996,

Stressing the need for the full engagement of the United Nations in the process of building Palestinian institutions and in providing broad assistance to the Palestinian people, including assistance in the fields of elections, police training and public administration,

Noting the appointment by the Secretary-General in June 1994 of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories,

Welcoming the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993, and the establishment of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee and the work being done by the World Bank as its secretariat, as well as the establishment of the consultative group and the convening in Paris, on 9 January 1996, of the Ministerial Conference on Economic Assistance to the Palestinian People,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>136</sup>

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General;<sup>136</sup>
2. Expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his rapid response and efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people;
3. Also expresses its appreciation to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people;
4. Stresses the importance of the work done by the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories;
5. Urges Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people in order to assist in the development of the West Bank and Gaza, and to do so in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions;
6. Calls upon relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in accordance with the Palestinian priorities set forth by the

<sup>135</sup> A/51/166-E/1996/67.

<sup>136</sup> A/51/171-E/1996/75.

Palestinian Authority, with emphasis on national execution and capacity-building;

7. Urges Member States to open their markets to exports from the West Bank and Gaza and on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules;

8. Calls upon the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs;

9. Suggests the convening in 1997 of a United Nations-sponsored seminar on the Palestinian economy;

10. Requests the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution, containing:

(a) An assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people;

(b) An assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them;

11. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-second session, under the item entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance", the sub-item entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people".

84th plenary meeting  
13 December 1996

#### 51/151. Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity,<sup>137</sup>

Recalling the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations on regional arrangements or agencies, which set forth the basic principles governing their activities and establishing the legal framework for cooperation with the United Nations in the area of the maintenance of international peace and security, as well as resolution 49/57 of 9 December 1994, the annex to which contains the Declaration on the Enhancement of Cooperation between the United Nations and Regional Arrangements or Agencies in the Maintenance of International Peace and Security,

Recalling also the agreement of 15 November 1965 on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity as updated and signed on 9 October 1990 by the Secretaries-General of the two organizations,

Recalling further its resolutions on the enhancement of cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity, in particular resolutions 43/12 of 25 October

<sup>137</sup> A/51/386.



## General Assembly

Distr.  
GENERAL

A/RES/52/170  
18 February 1998

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Fifty-second session  
Agenda item 20 (d)

### RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/52/L.57/Rev.1 and Rev.1/Add.1)]

#### 52/170. Assistance to the Palestinian people

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 51/150 of 13 December 1996,

*Recalling also* previous resolutions on the question,

*Welcoming* the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements of 1993 between the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,<sup>1</sup> as well as the signing of the subsequent implementation agreements, including the Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip of 1995,<sup>2</sup>

*Gravely concerned* about the difficult economic and employment conditions facing the Palestinian people throughout the occupied territory,

*Conscious* of the urgent need for improvement in the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied territory and the living conditions of the Palestinian people,

*Aware* that development is difficult under occupation and best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

*Noting*, in the light of recent developments in the peace process, the great economic and social challenges facing the Palestinian people and their leadership,

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<sup>1</sup> A/48/486-S/26560, annex; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-eighth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1993*, document S/26560.

<sup>2</sup> A/51/889-S/1997/357, annex; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Fifty-second Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1997*, document S/1997/357.

*Conscious* of the urgent necessity for international assistance to the Palestinian people, taking into account the Palestinian priorities,

*Noting* the convening of the United Nations Seminar on Assistance to the Palestinian People, "Palestinian Human Development Needs",<sup>3</sup> held at Amman from 20 to 22 May 1997,

*Stressing* the need for the full engagement of the United Nations in the process of building Palestinian institutions and in providing broad assistance to the Palestinian people, including assistance in the fields of elections, police training and public administration,

*Noting* the appointment by the Secretary-General in June 1994 of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories,

*Welcoming* the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993, and the establishment of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee and the work being done by the World Bank as its secretariat, as well as the establishment of the consultative group,

*Welcoming also* the establishment by the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee of the Joint Liaison Committee, which provides a forum in which economic policy and practical matters related to donor assistance are discussed with the Palestinian Authority,

*Welcoming further* the meeting of the consultative group in Paris on 19 and 20 November 1996, at which the proposed programme of United Nations assistance for 1997 was presented to the donor community,

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>4</sup>

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;<sup>4</sup>
2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his rapid response and efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people;
3. *Also expresses its appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people;
4. *Stresses* the importance of the work done by the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories;
5. *Urges* Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people in order to assist in the development of the West Bank and Gaza, and to do so in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions;
6. *Calls upon* relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in accordance with the Palestinian priorities set forth by the Palestinian Authority, with emphasis on national execution and capacity-building;

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<sup>3</sup> A/52/179-E/1997/76.

<sup>4</sup> A/52/159-E/1997/69.

7. *Urges* Member States to open their markets to exports from the West Bank and Gaza and on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules;

8. *Calls upon* the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs;

9. *Suggests* the convening in 1998 of a United Nations-sponsored seminar on the Palestinian economy;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution, containing:

(a) An assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people;

(b) An assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them;

11. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-third session, under the item entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance", the sub-item entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people".

*73rd plenary meeting  
16 December 1997*



## General Assembly

Distr.  
GENERAL

A/RES/53/89  
29 January 1999

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Fifty-third session  
Agenda item 20 (d)

### RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/53/L.54/Rev.1)]

#### **53/89. Assistance to the Palestinian people**

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 52/170 of 16 December 1997,

*Recalling also* previous resolutions on the question,

*Welcoming* the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements of 1993 between the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,<sup>1</sup> as well as the signing of the subsequent implementation agreements, including the Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip of 1995,<sup>2</sup>

*Gravely concerned* about the difficult economic and employment conditions facing the Palestinian people throughout the occupied territory,

*Conscious* of the urgent need for improvement in the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied territory and the living conditions of the Palestinian people,

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<sup>1</sup> A/48/486-S/26560, annex; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-eighth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1993*, document S/26560.

<sup>2</sup> A/51/889-S/1997/357, annex; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Fifty-second Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1997*, document S/1997/357.

*Aware* that development is difficult under occupation and best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

*Noting*, in the light of recent developments in the peace process, the great economic and social challenges facing the Palestinian people and their leadership,

*Conscious* of the urgent necessity for international assistance to the Palestinian people, taking into account the Palestinian priorities,

*Noting* the convening of the United Nations Seminar on Assistance to the Palestinian People, entitled "Facing the challenges of the year 2000: promoting Palestinian national development",<sup>3</sup> held at Cairo on 27 and 28 April 1998,

*Stressing* the need for the full engagement of the United Nations in the process of building Palestinian institutions and in providing broad assistance to the Palestinian people, including assistance in the fields of elections, police training and public administration,

*Noting* the appointment by the Secretary-General in June 1994 of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories,

*Welcoming* the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993, and the establishment of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee and the work being done by the World Bank as its secretariat, as well as the establishment of the consultative group,

*Welcoming also* the establishment by the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee of the Joint Liaison Committee, which provides a forum in which economic policy and practical matters related to donor assistance are discussed with the Palestinian Authority,

*Welcoming further* the fifth meeting of the consultative group in Paris on 14 and 15 December 1997, in particular the pledges of the international donor community and the presentation of the first Palestinian Development Plan for the years 1998–2000,

*Welcoming* the results of the Ministerial Conference to Support Middle East Peace and Development, held in Washington, D.C., on 30 November 1998, and expressing appreciation for the pledges of the international donor community,

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>4</sup>

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;<sup>4</sup>
2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his rapid response and efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people;

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<sup>3</sup> A/53/152-E/1998/71, annex.

<sup>4</sup> A/53/153-E/1998/75.



3. *Also expresses its appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people;

4. *Stresses* the importance of the work done by the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories;

5. *Urges* Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions;

6. *Calls upon* relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in accordance with the Palestinian priorities set forth by the Palestinian Authority, with emphasis on national execution and capacity-building;

7. *Urges* Member States to open their markets to exports of Palestinian products on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules;

8. *Calls upon* the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs;

9. *Suggests* the convening in 1999 of a United Nations-sponsored seminar on the Palestinian economy;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution, containing:

(a) An assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people;

(b) An assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them;

11. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-fourth session, under the item entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance", the sub-item entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people".

*81st plenary meeting  
7 December 1998*



## General Assembly

Distr.  
GENERAL

A/RES/54/116  
9 February 2000

Fifty-fourth session  
Agenda item 20 (e)

### RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/54/L.52 and Add.1)]

#### **54/116. Assistance to the Palestinian people**

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 53/89 of 7 December 1998,

*Recalling also* previous resolutions on the question,

*Welcoming* the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements of 1993 between the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,<sup>1</sup> as well as the signing of the subsequent implementation agreements, including the Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip of 1995,<sup>2</sup> and the recent signing of the Sharm el-Sheikh Memorandum on 4 September 1999,

*Gravely concerned* about the difficult economic and employment conditions facing the Palestinian people throughout the occupied territory,

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<sup>1</sup> A/48/486-S/26560, annex; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-eighth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1993*, document S/26560.

<sup>2</sup> A/51/889-S/1997/357, annex; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Fifty-second Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1997*, document S/1997/357.

*Conscious* of the urgent need for improvement in the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied territory and the living conditions of the Palestinian people,

*Aware* that development is difficult under occupation and best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

*Noting* the great economic and social challenges facing the Palestinian people and their leadership,

*Conscious* of the urgent necessity for international assistance to the Palestinian people, taking into account the Palestinian priorities,

*Noting* the convening of the United Nations Seminar on Assistance to the Palestinian People, entitled "Facing the challenges of the year 2000: promoting Palestinian national development",<sup>3</sup> held at Cairo on 27 and 28 April 1998,

*Stressing* the need for the full engagement of the United Nations in the process of building Palestinian institutions and in providing broad assistance to the Palestinian people, including assistance in the fields of elections, police training and public administration,

*Noting* the appointment by the Secretary-General of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority,

*Welcoming* the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993, and the establishment of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee and the work being done by the World Bank as its secretariat, as well as the establishment of the Consultative Group,

*Welcoming also* the work of the Joint Liaison Committee, which provides a forum in which economic policy and practical matters related to donor assistance are discussed with the Palestinian Authority,

*Welcoming further* the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace and Development, held in Washington, D.C., on 30 November 1998, and expressing appreciation for the pledges of the international donor community,

*Welcoming* the meeting of the Consultative Group at Frankfurt, Germany, on 4 and 5 February 1999, in particular the pledges of the international donor community and the presentation of the Palestinian Development Plan for the years 1999–2003,

*Welcoming also* the meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee held at Tokyo on 14 and 15 October 1999, the signing of the updated Tripartite Action Plan, and the proposal to hold the next meeting at Lisbon,

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<sup>3</sup> A/53/152–E/1998/71, annex.

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>4</sup>

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;<sup>4</sup>
2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his rapid response and efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people;
3. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people;
4. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories;
5. *Urges* Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions;
6. *Calls upon* relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in accordance with Palestinian priorities set forth by the Palestinian Authority, with emphasis on national execution and capacity-building;
7. *Urges* Member States to open their markets to exports of Palestinian products on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules, and to implement fully existing trade and cooperation agreements;
8. *Calls upon* the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs;
9. *Suggests* the convening in 2000 of a United Nations-sponsored seminar on the Palestinian economy;
10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution, containing:
  - (a) An assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people;
  - (b) An assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them;

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<sup>4</sup> A/54/134-E/1999/85.

11. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-fifth session, under the item entitled “Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance”, the sub-item entitled “Assistance to the Palestinian people”.

*80th plenary meeting  
15 December 1999*



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
28 February 2001

**Fifty-fifth session**  
Agenda item 20 (c)

## Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/55/L.63 and Add.1)]

### 55/173. Assistance to the Palestinian people

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 54/116 of 15 December 1999,

*Recalling also* previous resolutions on the question,

*Welcoming* the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993, between the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,<sup>1</sup> as well as the signing of the subsequent implementation agreements, including the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, in Washington, D.C., on 28 September 1995,<sup>2</sup> and the signing of the Sharm el-Sheikh Memorandum on 4 September 1999,

*Gravely concerned* about the difficult economic and employment conditions facing the Palestinian people throughout the occupied territory,

*Conscious* of the urgent need for improvement in the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied territory and the living conditions of the Palestinian people,

*Aware* that development is difficult under occupation and best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

*Noting* the great economic and social challenges facing the Palestinian people and their leadership,

*Conscious* of the urgent necessity for international assistance to the Palestinian people, taking into account the Palestinian priorities,

*Noting* the convening of the United Nations seminar on assistance to the Palestinian people, entitled "Prospects for Palestinian economic development and the Middle East peace process",<sup>3</sup> held in Cairo on 20 and 21 June 2000,

*Stressing* the need for the full engagement of the United Nations in the process of building Palestinian institutions and in providing broad assistance to the

<sup>1</sup> A/48/486-S/26560, annex.

<sup>2</sup> A/51/889-S/1997/357, annex.

<sup>3</sup> A/55/144-E/2000/87, annex.

Palestinian people, including assistance in the fields of elections, police training and public administration,

*Noting* the appointment by the Secretary-General of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority,

*Welcoming* the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993, and the establishment of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee and the work being done by the World Bank as its secretariat, as well as the establishment of the Consultative Group,

*Welcoming also* the work of the Joint Liaison Committee, which provides a forum in which economic policy and practical matters related to donor assistance are discussed with the Palestinian Authority,

*Welcoming further* the results of the Ministerial Conference to Support Middle East Peace and Development, held in Washington, D.C., on 30 November 1998, and expressing appreciation for the pledges of the international donor community,

*Welcoming* the meeting of the Consultative Group in Frankfurt, Germany, on 4 and 5 February 1999, in particular the pledges of the international donor community and the presentation of the Palestinian Development Plan for the years 1999–2003,

*Welcoming also* the meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee held in Lisbon on 7 and 8 June 2000,

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>4</sup>

*Expressing grave concern* over the continuation of the recent tragic and violent events that have led to many deaths and injuries,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;<sup>4</sup>
2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his rapid response and efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people;
3. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people;
4. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories;
5. *Urges* Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions;

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<sup>4</sup> A/55/137-E/2000/95.

6. *Calls upon* relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in accordance with Palestinian priorities set forth by the Palestinian Authority, with emphasis on national execution and capacity-building;

7. *Urges* Member States to open their markets to exports of Palestinian products on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules, and to implement fully existing trade and cooperation agreements;

8. *Calls upon* the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs;

9. *Stresses* in this context the importance of ensuring the free passage of aid to the Palestinian people and the free movement of persons and goods;

10. *Urges* the international donor community, United Nations agencies and organizations and non-governmental organizations to extend as rapidly as possible emergency economic and humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people to counter the impact of the current crisis;

11. *Stresses* the need to implement the Paris Protocol on Economic Relations of 29 April 1994, fifth annex to the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip,<sup>5</sup> in particular with regard to the full and prompt clearance of Palestinian indirect tax revenues;

12. *Suggests* the convening in 2001 of a United Nations-sponsored seminar on assistance to the Palestinian people;

13. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution, containing:

(a) An assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people;

(b) An assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them;

14. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-sixth session, under the item entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance", the sub-item entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people".

*85th plenary meeting  
14 December 2000*

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<sup>5</sup> See A/51/889-S/1997/357, annex.





# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
12 February 2002

**Fifty-sixth session**  
Agenda item 20 (e)

## Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/56/L.59 and Add.1)]

### 56/111. Assistance to the Palestinian people

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 55/173 of 14 December 2000,

*Recalling also* previous resolutions on the question,

*Welcoming* the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993, between the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,<sup>1</sup> as well as the signing of the subsequent implementation agreements, including the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, in Washington, D.C., on 28 September 1995,<sup>2</sup> and the signing of the Sharm el-Sheikh Memorandum on 4 September 1999,

*Gravely concerned* at the difficult economic and employment conditions facing the Palestinian people throughout the occupied territory,

*Conscious* of the urgent need for improvement in the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied territory and the living conditions of the Palestinian people,

*Aware* that development is difficult under occupation and best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

*Noting* the great economic and social challenges facing the Palestinian people and their leadership,

*Conscious* of the urgent necessity for international assistance to the Palestinian people, taking into account the Palestinian priorities,

*Noting* the convening of the United Nations seminar on assistance to the Palestinian people, held in Vienna on 20 and 21 February 2001, to review the state of the Palestinian economy,<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A/48/486-S/26560, annex.

<sup>2</sup> A/51/889-S/1997/357, annex.

<sup>3</sup> See A/56/89-E/2001/89, annex.

*Stressing* the need for the full engagement of the United Nations in the process of building Palestinian institutions and in providing broad assistance to the Palestinian people, including assistance in the fields of elections, police training and public administration,

*Noting* the appointment by the Secretary-General of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority,

*Welcoming* the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993, and the establishment of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee and the work being done by the World Bank as its secretariat, as well as the establishment of the Consultative Group,

*Welcoming also* the work of the Joint Liaison Committee, which provides a forum in which economic policy and practical matters related to donor assistance are discussed with the Palestinian Authority,

*Welcoming further* the results of the Ministerial Conference to Support Middle East Peace and Development, held in Washington, D.C., on 30 November 1998, and expressing appreciation for the pledges of the international donor community,

*Welcoming* the meeting of the Consultative Group in Frankfurt, Germany, on 4 and 5 February 1999, in particular the pledges of the international donor community and the presentation of the Palestinian Development Plan for the years 1999–2003,

*Welcoming also* the meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee held in Lisbon on 7 and 8 June 2000,

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>4</sup>

*Expressing grave concern* at the continuation of the recent tragic and violent events that have led to many deaths and injuries,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;<sup>4</sup>
2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his rapid response and efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people;
3. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people;
4. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories;
5. *Urges* Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, in close

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<sup>4</sup> A/56/123-E/2001/97 and Corr.1.

cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions;

6. *Calls upon* relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in accordance with Palestinian priorities set forth by the Palestinian Authority, with emphasis on national execution and capacity-building;

7. *Urges* Member States to open their markets to exports of Palestinian products on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules, and to implement fully existing trade and cooperation agreements;

8. *Calls upon* the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs;

9. *Stresses* in this context the importance of ensuring the free passage of aid to the Palestinian people and the free movement of persons and goods;

10. *Urges* the international donor community, United Nations agencies and organizations and non-governmental organizations to extend as rapidly as possible emergency economic and humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people to counter the impact of the current crisis;

11. *Stresses* the need to implement the Paris Protocol on Economic Relations of 29 April 1994, fifth annex to the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip,<sup>2</sup> in particular with regard to the full and prompt clearance of Palestinian indirect tax revenues;

12. *Suggests* the convening in 2002 of a United Nations-sponsored seminar on assistance to the Palestinian people;

13. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution, containing:

(a) An assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people;

(b) An assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them;

14. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-seventh session the sub-item entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people".

*87th plenary meeting  
14 December 2001*



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
27 February 2003

**Fifty-seventh session**  
Agenda item 21 (c)

## Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/57/L.51 and Add.1)]

### 57/147. Assistance to the Palestinian people

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 56/111 of 14 December 2001, as well as previous resolutions on the question,

*Recalling also* the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993, by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,<sup>1</sup> and the subsequent implementation agreements concluded by the two sides,

*Gravely concerned* at the deterioration in the living conditions of the Palestinian people throughout the occupied territory, which constitutes a mounting humanitarian crisis,

*Conscious* of the urgent need for improvement in the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied territory,

*Aware* that development is difficult under occupation and is best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

*Noting* the great economic and social challenges facing the Palestinian people and their leadership,

*Conscious* of the urgent necessity for international assistance to the Palestinian people, taking into account the Palestinian priorities,

*Noting* the convening of the United Nations seminar on assistance to the Palestinian people, held in Vienna on 20 and 21 February 2001, to review the state of the Palestinian economy,<sup>2</sup>

*Stressing* the need for the full engagement of the United Nations in the process of building Palestinian institutions and in providing broad assistance to the Palestinian people, and welcoming in this regard the establishment by the Quartet of the Task Force on Palestinian Reform,

<sup>1</sup> A/48/486-S/26560, annex.

<sup>2</sup> See A/56/89-E/2001/89, annex.

*Noting* the appointment by the Secretary-General of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority,

*Welcoming* the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993, the establishment of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee and the work being done by the World Bank as its secretariat and the establishment of the Consultative Group, as well as all follow-up meetings and international mechanisms established to provide assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Welcoming also* the work of the Joint Liaison Committee, which provides a forum in which economic policy and practical matters related to donor assistance are discussed with the Palestinian Authority,

*Stressing* the continued importance of the work of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee in the coordination of assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>3</sup>

*Expressing grave concern* at the continuation of the recent tragic and violent events that have led to many deaths and injuries,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;<sup>3</sup>
2. *Also takes note* of the report of the Personal Humanitarian Envoy of the Secretary-General on the humanitarian conditions and needs of the Palestinian people;<sup>4</sup>
3. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his rapid response and efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people;
4. *Also expresses its appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people;
5. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories;
6. *Urges* Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions;
7. *Calls upon* relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian

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<sup>3</sup> A/57/130-E/2002/79.

<sup>4</sup> Available on the Internet at [http://domino.un.org/bertini\\_rpt.htm](http://domino.un.org/bertini_rpt.htm).

people in accordance with Palestinian priorities set forth by the Palestinian Authority;

8. *Urges* Member States to open their markets to exports of Palestinian products on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules, and to implement fully existing trade and cooperation agreements;

9. *Calls upon* the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs;

10. *Stresses* in this context the importance of ensuring the free passage of aid to the Palestinian people and the free movement of persons and goods;

11. *Urges* the international donor community, United Nations agencies and organizations and non-governmental organizations to extend as rapidly as possible emergency economic and humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people to counter the impact of the current crisis;

12. *Stresses* the need to implement the Paris Protocol on Economic Relations of 29 April 1994, fifth annex to the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, signed in Washington, D.C., on 28 September 1995,<sup>5</sup> in particular with regard to the full and prompt clearance of Palestinian indirect tax revenues;

13. *Suggests* the convening in 2003 of a United Nations-sponsored seminar on assistance to the Palestinian people;

14. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution, containing:

(a) An assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people;

(b) An assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them;

15. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-eighth session the sub-item entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people".

*75th plenary meeting  
16 December 2002*

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<sup>5</sup> A/51/889-S/1997/357, annex.



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
3 February 2004

**Fifty-eighth session**  
Agenda item 40 (e)

## Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 17 December 2003

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/58/L.33/Rev.1 and Add.1)]

### **58/113. Assistance to the Palestinian people**

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 57/147 of 16 December 2002, as well as previous resolutions on the question,

*Recalling also* the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993, by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,<sup>1</sup> and the subsequent implementation agreements concluded by the two sides,

*Gravely concerned* at the deterioration in the living conditions of the Palestinian people throughout the occupied territory, which constitutes a mounting humanitarian crisis,

*Conscious* of the urgent need for improvement in the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied territory,

*Aware* that development is difficult under occupation and is best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

*Noting* the great economic and social challenges facing the Palestinian people and their leadership,

*Conscious* of the urgent necessity for international assistance to the Palestinian people, taking into account the Palestinian priorities,

*Welcoming* the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993, the establishment of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee and the work being done by the World Bank as its secretariat and the establishment of the Consultative Group, as well as all follow-up meetings and international mechanisms established to provide assistance to the Palestinian people,

<sup>1</sup> A/48/486-S/26560, annex.

*Welcoming also* the work of the Joint Liaison Committee, which provides a forum in which economic policy and practical matters related to donor assistance are discussed with the Palestinian Authority,

*Stressing* the continued importance of the work of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee in the coordination of assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Noting* the convening of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee meetings, held in London on 18 and 19 February 2003 and in Rome on 10 December 2003, to review the state of the Palestinian economy,

*Stressing* the need for the full engagement of the United Nations in the process of building Palestinian institutions and in providing broad assistance to the Palestinian people, and welcoming in this regard the support to the Palestinian Authority by the Task Force on Palestinian Reform established by the Quartet in 2002,

*Noting*, in this regard, the active participation of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority in the activities of the Special Envoys of the Quartet,

*Welcoming* the endorsement by the Security Council, in its resolution 1515 (2003) of 19 November 2003, of the performance-based road map to a permanent two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict,<sup>2</sup> and stressing the need for its implementation and compliance with its provisions,

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>3</sup>

*Expressing grave concern* at the continuation of the recent tragic and violent events that have led to many deaths and injuries,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;<sup>3</sup>
2. *Also takes note* of the report of the Personal Humanitarian Envoy of the Secretary-General on the humanitarian conditions and needs of the Palestinian people;<sup>4</sup>
3. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his rapid response and efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people;
4. *Also expresses its appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people;
5. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories;
6. *Urges* Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and

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<sup>2</sup> S/2003/529, annex.

<sup>3</sup> A/58/88-E/2003/84 and Corr.1.

<sup>4</sup> Available on the Internet at [http://domino.un.org/bertini\\_rpt.htm](http://domino.un.org/bertini_rpt.htm).



regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions;

7. *Calls upon* relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in accordance with Palestinian priorities set forth by the Palestinian Authority;

8. *Urges* Member States to open their markets to exports of Palestinian products on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules, and to implement fully existing trade and cooperation agreements;

9. *Calls upon* the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs;

10. *Stresses*, in this context, the importance of ensuring the free passage of aid to the Palestinian people and the free movement of persons and goods;

11. *Urges* the international donor community, United Nations agencies and organizations and non-governmental organizations to extend as rapidly as possible emergency economic and humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people to counter the impact of the current crisis;

12. *Stresses* the need to implement the Paris Protocol on Economic Relations of 29 April 1994, fifth annex to the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, signed in Washington, D.C., on 28 September 1995,<sup>5</sup> in particular with regard to the full and prompt clearance of Palestinian indirect tax revenues, and welcomes the progress made in this regard;

13. *Suggests* the convening in 2004 of a United Nations-sponsored seminar on assistance to the Palestinian people;

14. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution, containing:

(a) An assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people;

(b) An assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them;

15. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-ninth session the sub-item entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people".

*75th plenary meeting  
17 December 2003*

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<sup>5</sup> A/51/889-S/1997/357, annex.



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
8 February 2005

**Fifty-ninth session**  
Agenda item 39 (c)

## Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 2 December 2004

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/59/L.24 and Add.1)]

### **59/56. Assistance to the Palestinian people**

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 58/113 of 17 December 2003, as well as previous resolutions on the question,

*Recalling also* the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993, by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,<sup>1</sup> and the subsequent implementation agreements concluded by the two sides,

*Gravely concerned* at the deterioration in the living conditions of the Palestinian people throughout the occupied territory, which constitutes a mounting humanitarian crisis,

*Conscious* of the urgent need for improvement in the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied territory,

*Aware* that development is difficult under occupation and is best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

*Noting* the great economic and social challenges facing the Palestinian people and their leadership,

*Conscious* of the urgent necessity for international assistance to the Palestinian people, taking into account the Palestinian priorities,

*Welcoming* the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993, the establishment of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee and the work being done by the World Bank as its secretariat and the establishment of the Consultative Group, as well as all follow-up meetings and international mechanisms established to provide assistance to the Palestinian people,

<sup>1</sup> A/48/486-S/26560, annex.

*Welcoming also* the work of the Joint Liaison Committee, which provides a forum in which economic policy and practical matters related to donor assistance are discussed with the Palestinian Authority,

*Stressing* the continued importance of the work of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee in the coordination of assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Noting* the upcoming meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee to review the state of the Palestinian economy,

*Stressing* the need for the full engagement of the United Nations in the process of building Palestinian institutions and in providing broad assistance to the Palestinian people, and welcoming in this regard the support provided to the Palestinian Authority by the Task Force on Palestinian Reform, established by the Quartet in 2002,

*Noting*, in this regard, the active participation of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority in the activities of the Special Envoys of the Quartet,

*Welcoming* the endorsement by the Security Council, in its resolution 1515 (2003) of 19 November 2003, of the performance-based road map to a permanent two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict,<sup>2</sup> and stressing the need for its implementation and compliance with its provisions,

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>3</sup>

*Expressing grave concern* at the continuation of the recent tragic and violent events that have led to many deaths and injuries,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;<sup>3</sup>
2. *Also takes note* of the report of the Personal Humanitarian Envoy of the Secretary-General on the humanitarian conditions and needs of the Palestinian people;<sup>4</sup>
3. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his rapid response and efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people;
4. *Also expresses its appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people;
5. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories;
6. *Urges* Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as

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<sup>2</sup> S/2003/529, annex.

<sup>3</sup> A/59/121-E/2004/88.

<sup>4</sup> Available from [http://domino.un.org/bertini\\_rpt.htm](http://domino.un.org/bertini_rpt.htm).

possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions;

7. *Calls upon* relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in accordance with Palestinian priorities set forth by the Palestinian Authority;

8. *Urges* Member States to open their markets to exports of Palestinian products on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules, and to implement fully existing trade and cooperation agreements;

9. *Calls upon* the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs;

10. *Stresses*, in this context, the importance of ensuring the free passage of aid to the Palestinian people and the free movement of persons and goods;

11. *Urges* the international donor community, United Nations agencies and organizations and non-governmental organizations to extend as rapidly as possible emergency economic and humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people to counter the impact of the current crisis;

12. *Stresses* the need to implement the Paris Protocol on Economic Relations of 29 April 1994, fifth annex to the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, signed in Washington, D.C., on 28 September 1995,<sup>5</sup> in particular with regard to the full and prompt clearance of Palestinian indirect tax revenues, and welcomes the progress made in this regard;

13. *Suggests* the convening in 2005 of a United Nations-sponsored seminar on assistance to the Palestinian people;

14. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution, containing:

(a) An assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people;

(b) An assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them;

15. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixtieth session the sub-item entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people".

*65th plenary meeting  
2 December 2004*

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<sup>5</sup> A/51/889-S/1997/357, annex.



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
17 March 2006

Sixtieth session  
Agenda item 73 (d)

## Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 15 December 2005

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/60/L.36 and Add.1)]

### 60/126. Assistance to the Palestinian people

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 59/56 of 2 December 2004, as well as previous resolutions on the question,

*Recalling also* the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993, by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,<sup>1</sup> and the subsequent implementation agreements concluded by the two sides,

*Recalling further* the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,<sup>2</sup> the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights<sup>2</sup> and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,<sup>3</sup>

*Gravely concerned* at the deterioration in the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in particular children, throughout the occupied territory, which constitutes a mounting humanitarian crisis,

*Conscious* of the urgent need for improvement in the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied territory,

*Aware* that development is difficult under occupation and is best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

*Noting* the great economic and social challenges facing the Palestinian people and their leadership,

*Emphasizing* the importance of the safety and well-being of all children in the whole Middle East region,

*Deeply concerned* about the negative impact, including the health and psychological consequences, of violence on the present and future well-being of children in the region,

<sup>1</sup> A/48/486-S/26560, annex.

<sup>2</sup> See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

*Conscious* of the urgent necessity for international assistance to the Palestinian people, taking into account the Palestinian priorities,

*Welcoming* the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993, the establishment of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee and the work being done by the World Bank as its secretariat and the establishment of the Consultative Group, as well as all follow-up meetings and international mechanisms established to provide assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Welcoming also* the work of the Joint Liaison Committee, which provides a forum in which economic policy and practical matters related to donor assistance are discussed with the Palestinian Authority,

*Stressing* the continued importance of the work of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee in the coordination of assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Noting* the upcoming meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee to review the state of the Palestinian economy, and progress in drawing up a medium-term development plan for the Palestinian economy,

*Stressing* the need for the full engagement of the United Nations in the process of building Palestinian institutions and in providing broad assistance to the Palestinian people, and welcoming in this regard the support provided to the Palestinian Authority by the Task Force on Palestinian Reform, established by the Quartet in 2002,

*Noting*, in this regard, the active participation of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority in the activities of the Special Envoys of the Quartet,

*Welcoming* the endorsement by the Security Council, in its resolution 1515 (2003) of 19 November 2003, of the performance-based road map to a permanent two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict,<sup>4</sup> and stressing the need for its implementation and compliance with its provisions,

*Welcoming also* the Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and parts of the northern West Bank as a step towards implementation of the road map,

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>5</sup>

*Expressing grave concern* at the continuation of the recent tragic and violent events that have led to many deaths and injuries, including among children,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;<sup>5</sup>
2. *Also takes note* of the report of the Personal Humanitarian Envoy of the Secretary-General on the humanitarian conditions and needs of the Palestinian people;<sup>6</sup>
3. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his rapid response and efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people;

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<sup>4</sup> S/2003/529, annex.

<sup>5</sup> A/60/90-E/2005/80.

<sup>6</sup> Available from [http://domino.un.org/bertini\\_rpt.htm](http://domino.un.org/bertini_rpt.htm).

4. *Also expresses its appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people;

5. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories;

6. *Urges* Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions;

7. *Calls upon* relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in accordance with Palestinian priorities set forth by the Palestinian Authority;

8. *Calls upon* the international community to provide urgently needed assistance and services in an effort to alleviate the dire humanitarian crisis being faced by Palestinian children and their families and to help in the reconstruction of relevant Palestinian institutions;

9. *Urges* Member States to open their markets to exports of Palestinian products on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules, and to implement fully existing trade and cooperation agreements;

10. *Calls upon* the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs;

11. *Stresses*, in this context, the importance of ensuring the free passage of aid to the Palestinian people and the free movement of persons and goods;

12. *Welcomes* the recent agreement on movement and access between the two sides and the subsequent opening of the Rafah border on 25 November 2005, and stresses the need to ensure that the commitments made in the agreement are fully implemented in accordance with the timeline set out in the agreement;

13. *Stresses* the need for all concerned parties to work together for the speedy resolution of all outstanding issues relating to disengagement, and welcomes in this regard the work of the Quartet Special Envoy for Disengagement;

14. *Urges* the international donor community, United Nations agencies and organizations and non-governmental organizations to extend as rapidly as possible emergency economic and humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people to counter the impact of the current crisis;

15. *Stresses* the need to implement the Paris Protocol on Economic Relations of 29 April 1994, fifth annex to the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, signed in Washington, D.C., on 28 September 1995,<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> A/51/889-S/1997/357, annex.

in particular with regard to the full and prompt clearance of Palestinian indirect tax revenues, and welcomes the progress made in this regard;

16. *Suggests* the convening in 2006 of a United Nations-sponsored seminar on assistance to the Palestinian people;

17. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution, containing:

(a) An assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people;

(b) An assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them;

18. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-first session the sub-item entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people".

*63rd plenary meeting  
15 December 2005*





# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
23 January 2007

Sixty-first session  
Agenda item 69 (d)

## Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 14 December 2006

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/61/L.47 and Add.1)]

### 61/135. Assistance to the Palestinian people

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 60/126 of 15 December 2005, as well as previous resolutions on the question,

*Recalling also* the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993, by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,<sup>1</sup> and the subsequent implementation agreements concluded by the two sides,

*Recalling further* the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,<sup>2</sup> the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights<sup>2</sup> and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,<sup>3</sup>

*Gravely concerned* at the deterioration in the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in particular children, throughout the occupied territory, which constitutes a mounting humanitarian crisis,

*Conscious* of the urgent need for improvement in the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied territory,

*Aware* that development is difficult under occupation and is best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

*Noting* the great economic and social challenges facing the Palestinian people and their leadership,

*Emphasizing* the importance of the safety and well-being of all children in the whole Middle East region,

*Deeply concerned* about the negative impact, including the health and psychological consequences, of violence on the present and future well-being of children in the region,

<sup>1</sup> A/48/486-S/26560, annex.

<sup>2</sup> See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

*Conscious* of the urgent necessity for international assistance to the Palestinian people, taking into account the Palestinian priorities,

*Welcoming* the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993, the establishment of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee and the work being done by the World Bank as its secretariat and the establishment of the Consultative Group, as well as all follow-up meetings and international mechanisms established to provide assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Welcoming also* the results of the “Stockholm International Donor Conference on the Humanitarian Situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories” of 1 September 2006,

*Welcoming further* the work of the Joint Liaison Committee, which provides a forum in which economic policy and practical matters related to donor assistance are discussed with the Palestinian Authority,

*Stressing* the continued importance of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee in the coordination of assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Stressing also* the need for the full engagement of the United Nations in the process of building Palestinian institutions and in providing broad assistance to the Palestinian people, and welcoming in this regard the support provided to the Palestinian Authority by the Task Force on Palestinian Reform, established by the Quartet in 2002,

*Noting*, in this regard, the active participation of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority in the activities of the Special Envoys of the Quartet,

*Welcoming* the endorsement by the Security Council, in its resolution 1515 (2003) of 19 November 2003, of the performance-based road map to a permanent two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict,<sup>4</sup> and stressing the need for its implementation and compliance with its provisions,

*Noting* the Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and parts of the northern West Bank as a step towards implementation of the road map,

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>5</sup>

*Expressing grave concern* at the continuation of the recent tragic and violent events that have led to many deaths and injuries, including among children,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;<sup>5</sup>
2. *Also takes note* of the report of the Personal Humanitarian Envoy of the Secretary-General on the humanitarian conditions and needs of the Palestinian people;<sup>6</sup>
3. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his rapid response and efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people;

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<sup>4</sup> S/2003/529, annex.

<sup>5</sup> A/60/90-E/2005/80.

<sup>6</sup> Available from [http://domino.un.org/bertini\\_rpt.htm](http://domino.un.org/bertini_rpt.htm).

4. *Also expresses its appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people;

5. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories;

6. *Urges* Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions;

7. *Calls upon* relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in accordance with priorities set forth by the Palestinian side;

8. *Calls upon* the international community to provide urgently needed assistance and services in an effort to alleviate the dire humanitarian crisis being faced by Palestinian children and their families and to help in the reconstruction of relevant Palestinian institutions;

9. *Welcomes* the role that the temporary international mechanism plays in assisting directly the Palestinian people under the current circumstances, and encourages interested donors to make use of the mechanism;

10. *Urges* Member States to open their markets to exports of Palestinian products on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules, and to implement fully existing trade and cooperation agreements;

11. *Calls upon* the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs;

12. *Stresses*, in this context, the importance of ensuring the free passage of aid to the Palestinian people and the free movement of persons and goods;

13. *Also stresses* the need for the full implementation by both parties of the Agreement on Movement and Access and of the Agreed Principles for the Rafah Crossing, of 15 November 2005, to allow for the freedom of movement of the Palestinian civilian population within and into and out of the Gaza Strip;

14. *Urges* the international donor community, United Nations agencies and organizations and non-governmental organizations to extend as rapidly as possible emergency economic and humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people to counter the impact of the current crisis;

15. *Stresses* the need to implement the Paris Protocol on Economic Relations of 29 April 1994, fifth annex to the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, signed in Washington, D.C., on 28 September 1995,<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> A/51/889-S/1997/357, annex.

in particular with regard to the full and prompt clearance of Palestinian indirect tax revenues;

16. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution, containing:

(a) An assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people;

(b) An assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them;

17. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-second session the sub-item entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people".

*79th plenary meeting  
14 December 2006*



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
1 February 2008

Sixty-second session  
Agenda item 71 (c)

## Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 17 December 2007

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/62/L.36 and Add.1)]

### 62/93. Assistance to the Palestinian people

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 61/135 of 14 December 2006, as well as previous resolutions on the question,

*Recalling also* the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993, by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,<sup>1</sup> and the subsequent implementation agreements concluded by the two sides,

*Recalling further* the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,<sup>2</sup> the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights<sup>2</sup> and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,<sup>3</sup>

*Gravely concerned* at the deterioration in the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in particular children, throughout the occupied Palestinian territory, which constitutes a mounting humanitarian crisis,

*Conscious* of the urgent need for improvement in the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied territory,

*Welcoming*, in this context, the development of projects, notably on infrastructure, to revive the Palestinian economy and improve the living conditions of the Palestinian people, stressing the need to create the appropriate conditions to facilitate the implementation of these projects, and noting the contribution of partners in the region and the international community,

*Aware* that development is difficult under occupation and is best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

*Noting* the great economic and social challenges facing the Palestinian people and their leadership,

<sup>1</sup> A/48/486-S/26560, annex.

<sup>2</sup> See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

*Emphasizing* the importance of the safety and well-being of all people, in particular children, in the whole Middle East region,

*Deeply concerned* about the negative impact, including the health and psychological consequences, of violence on the present and future well-being of children in the region,

*Conscious* of the urgent necessity for international assistance to the Palestinian people, taking into account the Palestinian priorities,

*Expressing grave concern* about the humanitarian situation in Gaza following recent events, and underlining the importance of emergency and humanitarian assistance,

*Welcoming* the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993, the establishment of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians and the work being done by the World Bank as its secretariat and the establishment of the Consultative Group, as well as all follow-up meetings and international mechanisms established to provide assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Welcoming also* the meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, held in New York on 24 September 2007, and underlining the importance of the Paris donors' conference of 17 December 2007 in mobilizing the donors, following on from the international conference held in Annapolis, United States of America, on 27 November 2007, to provide financial and political support for the Palestinian Authority and, in the meantime, also to provide assistance to alleviate the socio-economic and humanitarian situation being faced by the Palestinian people,

*Welcoming further* the work of the Joint Liaison Committee, which provides a forum in which economic policy and practical matters related to donor assistance are discussed with the Palestinian Authority,

*Stressing* the need for the full engagement of the United Nations in the process of building Palestinian institutions and in providing broad assistance to the Palestinian people, and welcoming in this regard the support provided to the Palestinian Authority by the Task Force on Palestinian Reform, established by the Quartet in 2002,

*Welcoming* the appointment of the Quartet's Special Representative, Tony Blair, charged with developing, with the Government of the Palestinian Authority, a multi-year agenda to strengthen institutions, promote economic development and mobilize international funds,

*Noting* the active participation of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority in the activities of the Special Envoys of the Quartet,

*Welcoming* the endorsement by the Security Council, in its resolution 1515 (2003) of 19 November 2003, of the performance-based road map to a permanent two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict,<sup>4</sup> and stressing the need for its implementation and compliance with its provisions,

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<sup>4</sup> S/2003/529, annex.

*Noting* the Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and parts of the northern West Bank as a step towards implementation of the road map,

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>5</sup>

*Expressing grave concern* about the continuation of the tragic and violent events that have led to many deaths and injuries, including among children,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;<sup>5</sup>
2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his rapid response and efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people;
3. *Also expresses its appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people;
4. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories;
5. *Urges* Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions;
6. *Welcomes*, in this regard, the meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians and the perspective of the Paris donors' conference, and encourages donors, in this regard, to increase their direct assistance to the Palestinian Authority in accordance with its government programme in order to enable it to build a viable and prosperous Palestinian state;
7. *Calls upon* relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in accordance with priorities set forth by the Palestinian side;
8. *Calls upon* the international community to provide urgently needed assistance and services in an effort to alleviate the dire humanitarian situation being faced by Palestinian children and their families and to help in the reconstruction of relevant Palestinian institutions;
9. *Stresses* the role that the temporary international mechanism has been playing in assisting directly the Palestinian people, and welcomes its extension;
10. *Urges* Member States to open their markets to exports of Palestinian products on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules, and to implement fully existing trade and cooperation agreements;
11. *Calls upon* the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs;

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<sup>5</sup> A/62/82-E/2007/66.

12. *Stresses*, in this context, the importance of ensuring the free passage of humanitarian aid to the Palestinian people and the free movement of persons and goods;

13. *Also stresses* the need for the full implementation by both parties of the Agreement on Movement and Access and of the Agreed Principles for the Rafah Crossing, of 15 November 2005, to allow for the freedom of movement of the Palestinian civilian population within and into and out of the Gaza Strip;

14. *Urges* the international donor community, United Nations agencies and organizations and non-governmental organizations to extend as rapidly as possible to the Palestinian people emergency economic assistance and humanitarian assistance, particularly in the Gaza Strip, to counter the impact of the current crisis;

15. *Stresses* the need for the continued implementation of the Paris Protocol on Economic Relations of 29 April 1994, fifth annex to the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, signed in Washington, D.C., on 28 September 1995,<sup>6</sup> including with regard to the full, prompt and regular transfer of Palestinian indirect tax revenues;

16. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its sixty-third session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution, containing:

(a) An assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people;

(b) An assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them;

17. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-third session the sub-item entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people".

*74th plenary meeting  
17 December 2007*

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<sup>6</sup> A/51/889-S/1997/357, annex.





# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
5 March 2009

Sixty-third session  
Agenda item 65 (c)

## Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 11 December 2008

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/63/L.50 and Add.1)]

### 63/140. Assistance to the Palestinian people

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 62/93 of 17 December 2007, as well as previous resolutions on the question,

*Recalling also* the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993, by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,<sup>1</sup> and the subsequent implementation agreements concluded by the two sides,

*Recalling further* all relevant international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, and, in particular, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,<sup>2</sup> the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,<sup>2</sup> the Convention on the Rights of the Child,<sup>3</sup> and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,<sup>4</sup>

*Gravely concerned* at the deterioration in the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in particular women and children, throughout the occupied Palestinian territory, which constitutes a mounting humanitarian crisis,

*Conscious* of the urgent need for improvement in the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied territory,

*Welcoming*, in this context, the development of projects, notably on infrastructure, to revive the Palestinian economy and improve the living conditions of the Palestinian people, stressing the need to create the appropriate conditions to facilitate the implementation of these projects, and noting the contribution of partners in the region and the international community,

*Aware* that development is difficult under occupation and is best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

*Noting* the great economic and social challenges facing the Palestinian people and their leadership,

<sup>1</sup> A/48/486-S/26560, annex.

<sup>2</sup> See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

*Emphasizing* the importance of the safety and well-being of all people, in particular women and children, in the whole Middle East region,

*Deeply concerned* about the negative impact, including the health and psychological consequences, of violence on the present and future well-being of children in the region,

*Conscious* of the urgent necessity for international assistance to the Palestinian people, taking into account the Palestinian priorities,

*Expressing grave concern* about the humanitarian situation in Gaza, and underlining the importance of emergency and humanitarian assistance,

*Welcoming* the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993, the establishment of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians and the work being done by the World Bank as its secretariat and the establishment of the Consultative Group, as well as all follow-up meetings and international mechanisms established to provide assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Underlining* the importance of the International Donors' Conference for the Palestinian State, held in Paris on 17 December 2007, in mobilizing donors to provide financial and political support for the Palestinian Authority and, in the meantime, also to provide assistance to alleviate the socio-economic and humanitarian situation being faced by the Palestinian people, and welcoming the meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, held in London on 2 May 2008 and in New York on 22 September 2008,

*Welcoming* the plan to resume the activities of the Joint Liaison Committee, which provides a forum in which economic policy and practical matters related to donor assistance are discussed with the Palestinian Authority,

*Stressing* the need for the full engagement of the United Nations in the process of building Palestinian institutions and in providing broad assistance to the Palestinian people, and welcoming in this regard the support provided to the Palestinian Authority by the Task Force on Palestinian Reform, established by the Quartet in 2002,

*Welcoming* the outcome of the Berlin Conference in Support of Palestinian Civil Security and the Rule of Law, held on 24 June 2008, and calling for its speedy implementation,

*Welcoming also* the convening of the Palestine Investment Conference, held in Bethlehem from 21 to 23 May 2008, aimed at promoting an enabling environment for Palestinian private sector growth and development,

*Welcoming further* the action of the Special Representative of the Quartet, Tony Blair, charged with developing, with the Government of the Palestinian Authority, a multi-year agenda to strengthen institutions, promote economic development and mobilize international funds,

*Welcoming* the continuing calm between Gaza and southern Israel, and expressing hope that this calm will persist and result in further relief for the civilian population of Gaza, including the regular opening of the crossings for the movement of persons and goods, for both humanitarian and commercial flows,

*Noting* the active participation of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority in the activities of the Special Envoys of the Quartet,

*Welcoming* the endorsement by the Security Council, in its resolution 1515 (2003) of 19 November 2003, of the performance-based road map to a permanent two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict,<sup>5</sup> and stressing the need for its implementation and compliance with its provisions,

*Noting* the Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip in 2005 and parts of the northern West Bank as a step towards implementation of the road map,

*Commending* the continuous efforts made by both parties since the convening of the international conference in Annapolis, United States of America, on 27 November 2007, in order to reach an agreement as soon as possible, so as to ensure the establishment of an independent, democratic and viable Palestinian state, living in peace and security alongside Israel,

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>6</sup>

*Expressing grave concern* about the continuation of the tragic and violent events that have led to many deaths and injuries, including among children and women,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;<sup>6</sup>
2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his rapid response and efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people;
3. *Also expresses its appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people;
4. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories;
5. *Urges* Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions;
6. *Welcomes*, in this regard, the meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians and the significant results of the Paris International Donors' Conference for the Palestinian State which succeeded in mobilizing the international community and led to the disbursement of 1.36 billion United States dollars in budgetary support as of 22 September 2008;
7. *Stresses* the importance of following up on the results of the Paris Conference, including calls upon donors that have not yet converted their budget support pledges into disbursements to transfer funds as soon as possible, encourages all donors to increase their direct assistance to the Palestinian Authority in accordance with its government programme in order to enable it to build a viable and prosperous Palestinian state, underlines the need for equitable burden sharing

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<sup>5</sup> S/2003/529, annex.

<sup>6</sup> A/63/75-E/2008/52.

by donors in this effort, and encourages donors to consider aligning funding cycles with the Palestinian Authority's national budget cycle;

8. *Calls upon* relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in accordance with priorities set forth by the Palestinian side;

9. *Calls upon* the international community to provide urgently needed assistance and services in an effort to alleviate the dire humanitarian situation being faced by Palestinian women, children and their families and to help in the reconstruction of relevant Palestinian institutions;

10. *Stresses* the role that all funding instruments, including the European Commission's Palestinian-European Mechanism for the Management of Socio-Economic Aid and the World Bank trust fund, have been playing in directly assisting the Palestinian people;

11. *Urges* Member States to open their markets to exports of Palestinian products on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules, and to implement fully existing trade and cooperation agreements;

12. *Calls upon* the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs;

13. *Stresses*, in this context, the importance of ensuring free humanitarian access to the Palestinian people and the free movement of persons and goods;

14. *Also stresses* the need for the full implementation by both parties of the Agreement on Movement and Access and of the Agreed Principles for the Rafah Crossing, of 15 November 2005, to allow for the freedom of movement of the Palestinian civilian population, as well as for imports and exports, within and into and out of the Gaza Strip;

15. *Urges* the international donor community, United Nations agencies and organizations and non-governmental organizations to extend to the Palestinian people, as rapidly as possible, emergency economic assistance and humanitarian assistance, particularly in the Gaza Strip, to counter the impact of the current crisis;

16. *Stresses* the need for the continued implementation of the Paris Protocol on Economic Relations of 29 April 1994, fifth annex to the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, signed in Washington, D.C., on 28 September 1995,<sup>7</sup> including with regard to the full, prompt and regular transfer of Palestinian indirect tax revenues;

17. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution, containing:

(a) An assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people;

(b) An assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them;

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<sup>7</sup> A/51/889-S/1997/357, annex.

18. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-fourth session the sub-item entitled “Assistance to the Palestinian people”.

*68th plenary meeting  
11 December 2008*



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
21 January 2010

Sixty-fourth session  
Agenda item 70 (b)

## Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 16 December 2009

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/64/L.35 and Add.1)]

### 64/125. Assistance to the Palestinian people

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 63/140 of 11 December 2008, as well as its previous resolutions on the question,

*Recalling also* the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993, by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,<sup>1</sup> and the subsequent implementation agreements concluded by the two sides,

*Recalling further* all relevant international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, and, in particular, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,<sup>2</sup> the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,<sup>2</sup> the Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>3</sup> and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,<sup>4</sup>

*Gravely concerned* at the deterioration in the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in particular women and children, throughout the occupied Palestinian territory, which constitutes a mounting humanitarian crisis,

*Conscious* of the urgent need for improvement in the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied territory,

*Welcoming*, in this context, the development of projects, notably on infrastructure, to revive the Palestinian economy and improve the living conditions of the Palestinian people, stressing the need to create the appropriate conditions to facilitate the implementation of these projects, and noting the contribution of partners in the region and of the international community,

<sup>1</sup> A/48/486-S/26560, annex.

<sup>2</sup> See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.



*Aware* that development is difficult under occupation and is best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

*Noting* the great economic and social challenges facing the Palestinian people and their leadership,

*Emphasizing* the importance of the safety and well-being of all people, in particular women and children, in the whole Middle East region,

*Deeply concerned* about the negative impact, including the health and psychological consequences, of violence on the present and future well-being of children in the region,

*Conscious* of the urgent necessity for international assistance to the Palestinian people, taking into account the Palestinian priorities,

*Expressing grave concern* about the humanitarian situation in Gaza, and underlining the importance of emergency and humanitarian assistance,

*Welcoming* the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993, the establishment of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians and the work being done by the World Bank as its secretariat and the establishment of the Consultative Group, as well as all follow-up meetings and international mechanisms established to provide assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Underlining* the importance of the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 2 March 2009, in addressing the immediate humanitarian situation in Gaza and in mobilizing donors to provide financial and political support for the Palestinian Authority in order to alleviate the socio-economic and humanitarian situation being faced by the Palestinian people,

*Recalling* the International Donors' Conference for the Palestinian State, held in Paris on 17 December 2007, the Berlin Conference in Support of Palestinian Civil Security and the Rule of Law, held on 24 June 2008, and the Palestine Investment Conference, held in Bethlehem from 21 to 23 May 2008,

*Welcoming* the meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, held in Oslo on 7 and 8 May 2009 and in New York on 22 September 2009,

*Welcoming also* the resumption of activities of the Joint Liaison Committee, which provides a forum in which economic policy and practical matters related to donor assistance are discussed with the Palestinian Authority,

*Welcoming further* the work of the Palestinian Authority to implement the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan 2008–2010, and stressing the need for continued international support for the Plan,

*Stressing* the need for the full engagement of the United Nations in the process of building Palestinian institutions and in providing broad assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Welcoming* recent steps to ease the restrictions on movement and access in the West Bank, while stressing the need for further steps to be taken in this regard, and recognizing that such steps would improve living conditions and the situation on the ground and could promote Palestinian economic development,

*Welcoming also* the action of the Special Representative of the Quartet, Tony Blair, charged with developing, with the Government of the Palestinian Authority, a multi-year agenda to strengthen institutions, promote economic development and mobilize international funds,

*Stressing* the urgency of reaching a durable solution to the crisis in Gaza through the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1860 (2009) of 8 January 2009,

*Stressing also* the importance of the regular opening of the crossings for the movement of persons and goods, for both humanitarian and commercial flows,

*Noting* the active participation of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority in the activities of the Special Envoys of the Quartet,

*Welcoming* the endorsement by the Security Council, in resolution 1515 (2003) of 19 November 2003, of the performance-based road map to a permanent two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict,<sup>5</sup> and stressing the need for its implementation and compliance with its provisions,

*Noting* the Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip in 2005 and from parts of the northern West Bank as a step towards implementation of the road map,

*Commending* the continuous efforts by the Administration of the United States of America in pursuing vigorously a two-State solution, noting the commitment of the Quartet to remain actively involved, and welcoming steps towards the relaunching of direct, bilateral negotiations as part of a comprehensive resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict, on the basis of relevant Security Council resolutions and the terms of reference of the Madrid Conference, in order to ensure a political solution, with two States — Israel and an independent, democratic and viable Palestinian State — living side by side in peace and security,

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>6</sup>

*Expressing grave concern* about the continuation of the tragic and violent events that have led to many deaths and injuries, including among children and women,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;<sup>6</sup>
2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his rapid response and efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people;
3. *Also expresses its appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people;
4. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories;

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<sup>5</sup> S/2003/529, annex.

<sup>6</sup> A/64/78-E/2009/66.



5. *Urges* Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions;

6. *Welcomes*, in this regard, the meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians and the outcome of the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 2 March 2009, at which donors pledged approximately 4.5 billion United States dollars to support the needs of the Palestinian people;

7. *Recalls* the International Donors' Conference for the Palestinian State, held in Paris on 17 December 2007, the Berlin Conference in Support of Palestinian Civil Security and the Rule of Law, held on 24 June 2008, and the Palestine Investment Conference, held in Bethlehem from 21 to 23 May 2008;

8. *Stresses* the importance of following up on the results of the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza;

9. *Calls upon* donors that have not yet converted their budget support pledges into disbursements to transfer funds as soon as possible, encourages all donors to increase their direct assistance to the Palestinian Authority in accordance with its government programme in order to enable it to build a viable and prosperous Palestinian State, underlines the need for equitable burden sharing by donors in this effort, and encourages donors to consider aligning funding cycles with the Palestinian Authority's national budget cycle;

10. *Calls upon* relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in accordance with priorities set forth by the Palestinian side;

11. *Expresses its appreciation* for the work of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, and recognizes the vital role of the Agency in providing humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, particularly in the Gaza Strip;

12. *Calls upon* the international community to provide urgently needed assistance and services in an effort to alleviate the dire humanitarian situation being faced by Palestinian women, children and their families and to help in the reconstruction of relevant Palestinian institutions;

13. *Stresses* the role that all funding instruments, including the European Commission's Palestinian-European Mechanism for the Management of Socio-Economic Aid and the World Bank trust fund, have been playing in directly assisting the Palestinian people;

14. *Urges* Member States to open their markets to exports of Palestinian products on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules, and to implement fully existing trade and cooperation agreements;

15. *Calls upon* the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs;

16. *Stresses*, in this context, the importance of ensuring free humanitarian access to the Palestinian people and the free movement of persons and goods;

17. *Also stresses* the need for the full implementation by both parties of the Agreement on Movement and Access and of the Agreed Principles for the Rafah Crossing, of 15 November 2005, to allow for the freedom of movement of the Palestinian civilian population, as well as for imports and exports, within and into and out of the Gaza Strip;

18. *Further stresses* the need to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian personnel, premises, facilities, equipment, vehicles and supplies, as well as the need to ensure safe and unhindered access by humanitarian personnel and delivery of supplies and equipment, in order to allow such personnel to efficiently perform their task of assisting affected civilian populations;

19. *Urges* the international donor community, United Nations agencies and organizations and non-governmental organizations to extend to the Palestinian people, as rapidly as possible, emergency economic assistance and humanitarian assistance, particularly in the Gaza Strip, to counter the impact of the current crisis;

20. *Stresses* the need for the continued implementation of the Paris Protocol on Economic Relations of 29 April 1994, fifth annex to the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, signed in Washington, D.C., on 28 September 1995,<sup>7</sup> including with regard to the full, prompt and regular transfer of Palestinian indirect tax revenues;

21. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution, containing:

- (a) An assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people;
- (b) An assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them;

22. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-fifth session the sub-item entitled “Assistance to the Palestinian people”.

*64th plenary meeting  
16 December 2009*

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<sup>7</sup> A/51/889-S/1997/357, annex.



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
3 March 2011

Sixty-fifth session  
Agenda item 69 (b)

## Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 15 December 2010

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/65/L.46 and Add.1)]

### 65/134. Assistance to the Palestinian people

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 64/125 of 16 December 2009, as well as its previous resolutions on the question,

*Recalling also* the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993, by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,<sup>1</sup> and the subsequent implementation agreements concluded by the two sides,

*Recalling further* all relevant international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, and, in particular, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,<sup>2</sup> the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,<sup>2</sup> the Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>3</sup> and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,<sup>4</sup>

*Gravely concerned* at the difficult living conditions and the humanitarian situation affecting the Palestinian people, in particular women and children, throughout the occupied Palestinian territory,

*Conscious* of the urgent need for improvement in the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied territory,

*Welcoming*, in this context, the development of projects, notably on infrastructure, to revive the Palestinian economy and improve the living conditions of the Palestinian people, stressing the need to create the appropriate conditions to facilitate the implementation of these projects, and noting the contribution of partners in the region and of the international community,

<sup>1</sup> A/48/486-S/26560, annex.

<sup>2</sup> See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.



*Aware* that development is difficult under occupation and is best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

*Noting* the great economic and social challenges facing the Palestinian people and their leadership,

*Emphasizing* the importance of the safety and well-being of all people, in particular women and children, in the whole Middle East region, the promotion of which is facilitated, inter alia, in a stable and secure environment,

*Deeply concerned* about the negative impact, including the health and psychological consequences, of violence on the present and future well-being of children in the region,

*Conscious* of the urgent necessity for international assistance to the Palestinian people, taking into account the Palestinian priorities,

*Expressing grave concern* about the humanitarian situation in Gaza, and underlining the importance of emergency and humanitarian assistance,

*Welcoming* the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993, the establishment of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians and the work being done by the World Bank as its secretariat and the establishment of the Consultative Group, as well as all follow-up meetings and international mechanisms established to provide assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Underlining* the importance of the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 2 March 2009, in addressing the immediate humanitarian situation in Gaza and in mobilizing donors to provide financial and political support for the Palestinian Authority in order to alleviate the socio-economic and humanitarian situation being faced by the Palestinian people,

*Recalling* the International Donors' Conference for the Palestinian State, held in Paris on 17 December 2007, the Berlin Conference in Support of Palestinian Civil Security and the Rule of Law, held on 24 June 2008, and the Palestine Investment Conferences, held in Bethlehem from 21 to 23 May 2008 and on 2 and 3 June 2010,

*Welcoming* the latest meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, held in New York on 22 September 2009 and on 21 September 2010,

*Welcoming also* the activities of the Joint Liaison Committee, which provides a forum in which economic policy and practical matters related to donor assistance are discussed with the Palestinian Authority,

*Welcoming further* the work of the Palestinian Authority to implement the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan 2008–2010, and stressing the need for continued international support for the Palestinian State-building process,

*Stressing* the need for the full engagement of the United Nations in the process of building Palestinian institutions and in providing broad assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Welcoming* recent steps to ease the restrictions on movement and access in the West Bank, while stressing the need for further steps to be taken in this regard, and recognizing that such steps would improve living conditions and the situation on the ground and could promote further Palestinian economic development,

*Acknowledging* the recent measures announced by Israel regarding access to the Gaza Strip, while calling for full implementation and complementary measures that address the need for a fundamental change in policy that allows for the sustained and regular opening of the border crossings for the movement of persons and goods, including for the reconstruction and economic recovery of Gaza,

*Welcoming* the action of the Special Representative of the Quartet, Mr. Tony Blair, charged with developing, with the Government of the Palestinian Authority, a multi-year agenda to strengthen institutions, promote economic development and mobilize international funds,

*Stressing* the urgency of reaching a durable solution to the crisis in Gaza through the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1860 (2009) of 8 January 2009,

*Stressing also* the importance of the regular opening of the crossings for the movement of persons and goods, for both humanitarian and commercial flows,

*Noting* the active participation of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority in the activities of the Special Envoys of the Quartet,

*Welcoming* the endorsement by the Security Council, in resolution 1515 (2003) of 19 November 2003, of the performance-based road map to a permanent two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict,<sup>5</sup> and stressing the need for its implementation and compliance with its provisions,

*Commending* the efforts of the United States of America in pursuing vigorously a two-State solution, noting the commitment of the Quartet to remain actively involved and the need for strong international support to promote the peace process, and calling for the resumption and acceleration of negotiations between the Israeli and Palestinian sides towards a comprehensive resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict, on the basis of relevant Security Council resolutions and the terms of reference of the Madrid Conference, in order to ensure a political solution, with two States – Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous and viable Palestinian State – living side by side in peace and security,

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>6</sup>

*Expressing grave concern* about continuing violence against civilians,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;<sup>6</sup>
2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his rapid response and efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people;
3. *Also expresses its appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people;
4. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian

<sup>5</sup> S/2003/529, annex.

<sup>6</sup> A/65/77-E/2010/56.

Authority and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories;

5. *Urges* Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions;

6. *Welcomes*, in this regard, the meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, held in New York on 22 September 2009 and on 21 September 2010, and the outcome of the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 2 March 2009, at which donors pledged approximately 4.5 billion United States dollars to support the needs of the Palestinian people;

7. *Recalls* the International Donors' Conference for the Palestinian State, held in Paris on 17 December 2007, the Berlin Conference in Support of Palestinian Civil Security and the Rule of Law, held on 24 June 2008, and the Palestine Investment Conferences, held in Bethlehem from 21 to 23 May 2008 and on 2 and 3 June 2010;

8. *Stresses* the importance of following up on the results of the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza;

9. *Calls upon* donors that have not yet converted their budget support pledges into disbursements to transfer funds as soon as possible, encourages all donors to increase their direct assistance to the Palestinian Authority in accordance with its government programme in order to enable it to build a viable and prosperous Palestinian State, underlines the need for equitable burden-sharing by donors in this effort, and encourages donors to consider aligning funding cycles with the Palestinian Authority's national budget cycle;

10. *Calls upon* relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in accordance with priorities set forth by the Palestinian side;

11. *Expresses its appreciation* for the work of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, and recognizes the vital role of the Agency in providing humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, particularly in the Gaza Strip;

12. *Calls upon* the international community to provide urgently needed assistance and services in an effort to alleviate the difficult humanitarian situation being faced by Palestinian women, children and their families and to help in the reconstruction and development of relevant Palestinian institutions;

13. *Stresses* the role that all funding instruments, including the European Commission's Palestinian-European Mechanism for the Management of Socio-Economic Aid and the World Bank trust fund, have been playing in directly assisting the Palestinian people;

14. *Urges* Member States to open their markets to exports of Palestinian products on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules, and to implement fully existing trade and cooperation agreements;

15. *Calls upon* the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs;

16. *Stresses*, in this context, the importance of ensuring free humanitarian access to the Palestinian people and the free movement of persons and goods;

17. *Also stresses* the need for the full implementation by both parties of the Agreement on Movement and Access and of the Agreed Principles for the Rafah Crossing, of 15 November 2005, to allow for the freedom of movement of the Palestinian civilian population, as well as for imports and exports, within and into and out of the Gaza Strip;

18. *Further stresses* the need to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian personnel, premises, facilities, equipment, vehicles and supplies, as well as the need to ensure safe and unhindered access by humanitarian personnel and delivery of supplies and equipment, in order to allow such personnel to efficiently perform their task of assisting affected civilian populations;

19. *Urges* the international donor community, United Nations agencies and organizations and non-governmental organizations to extend to the Palestinian people, as rapidly as possible, emergency economic assistance and humanitarian assistance, particularly in the Gaza Strip, to counter the impact of the current crisis;

20. *Stresses* the need for the continued implementation of the Paris Protocol on Economic Relations of 29 April 1994, fifth annex to the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, signed in Washington, D.C., on 28 September 1995,<sup>7</sup> including with regard to the full, prompt and regular transfer of Palestinian indirect tax revenues;

21. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution, containing:

(a) An assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people;

(b) An assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them;

22. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-sixth session the sub-item entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people".

*67th plenary meeting  
15 December 2010*

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<sup>7</sup> A/51/889-S/1997/357, annex.



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
1 March 2012

Sixty-sixth session  
Agenda item 70 (b)

## Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 15 December 2011

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/66/L.27 and Add.1)]

### 66/118. Assistance to the Palestinian people

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 65/134 of 15 December 2010, as well as its previous resolutions on the question,

*Recalling also* the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993, by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,<sup>1</sup> and the subsequent implementation agreements concluded by the two sides,

*Recalling further* all relevant international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, and, in particular, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,<sup>2</sup> the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,<sup>2</sup> the Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>3</sup> and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,<sup>4</sup>

*Gravely concerned* at the difficult living conditions and humanitarian situation affecting the Palestinian people, in particular women and children, throughout the occupied Palestinian territory,

*Conscious* of the urgent need for improvement in the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied territory,

*Welcoming*, in this context, the development of projects, notably on infrastructure, to revive the Palestinian economy and improve the living conditions of the Palestinian people, stressing the need to create the appropriate conditions to facilitate the implementation of these projects, and noting the contribution of partners in the region and of the international community,

<sup>1</sup> A/48/486-S/26560, annex.

<sup>2</sup> See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.





*Aware* that development is difficult under occupation and is best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

*Noting* the great economic and social challenges facing the Palestinian people and their leadership,

*Emphasizing* the importance of the safety and well-being of all people, in particular women and children, in the whole Middle East region, the promotion of which is facilitated, inter alia, in a stable and secure environment,

*Deeply concerned* about the negative impact, including the health and psychological consequences, of violence on the present and future well-being of children in the region,

*Conscious* of the urgent necessity for international assistance to the Palestinian people, taking into account the Palestinian priorities,

*Expressing grave concern* about the humanitarian situation in Gaza, and underlining the importance of emergency and humanitarian assistance,

*Welcoming* the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993, the establishment of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians and the work being done by the World Bank as its secretariat and the establishment of the Consultative Group, as well as all follow-up meetings and international mechanisms established to provide assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Underlining* the importance of the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 2 March 2009, in addressing the immediate humanitarian situation in Gaza and in mobilizing donors to provide financial and political support for the Palestinian Authority in order to alleviate the socio-economic and humanitarian situation being faced by the Palestinian people,

*Recalling* the International Donors Conference for the Palestinian State, held in Paris on 17 December 2007, the Berlin Conference in Support of Palestinian Civil Security and the Rule of Law, held on 24 June 2008, and the Palestine Investment Conferences, held in Bethlehem from 21 to 23 May 2008 and on 2 and 3 June 2010,

*Welcoming* the latest meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, held in New York on 21 September 2010 and on 18 September 2011,

*Welcoming also* the activities of the Joint Liaison Committee, which provides a forum in which economic policy and practical matters related to donor assistance are discussed with the Palestinian Authority,

*Welcoming further* the implementation of the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan 2008–2010 and the presentation of the Palestinian National Development Plan 2011–2013 on governance, economy, social development and infrastructure, and stressing the need for continued international support for the Palestinian State-building process, as outlined in the summary of the Chair of the meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee in 2011,

*Stressing* the need for the full engagement of the United Nations in the process of building Palestinian institutions and in providing broad assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Welcoming* recent steps to ease the restrictions on movement and access in the West Bank, while stressing the need for further steps to be taken in this regard, and recognizing that such steps would improve living conditions and the situation on the ground and could promote further Palestinian economic development,

*Acknowledging* the recent measures announced by Israel regarding access to the Gaza Strip, while calling for full implementation and complementary measures that address the need for a fundamental change in policy that allows for the sustained and regular opening of the border crossings for the movement of persons and goods, including for the reconstruction and economic recovery of Gaza,

*Welcoming* the action of the Special Representative of the Quartet, Tony Blair, charged with developing, with the Government of the Palestinian Authority, a multi-year agenda to strengthen institutions, promote economic development and mobilize international funds,

*Stressing* the urgency of reaching a durable solution to the crisis in Gaza through the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1860 (2009) of 8 January 2009,

*Stressing also* the importance of the regular opening of the crossings for the movement of persons and goods, for both humanitarian and commercial flows,

*Noting* the active participation of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority in the activities of the Special Envoys of the Quartet,

*Welcoming* the endorsement by the Security Council, in resolution 1515 (2003) of 19 November 2003, of the performance-based road map to a permanent two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict,<sup>5</sup> and stressing the need for its implementation and compliance with its provisions,

*Commending* the efforts within the Quartet made by the United States of America, the European Union, the United Nations and the Russian Federation in pursuing vigorously a two-State solution, noting the commitment of the Quartet to remain actively involved and the need for strong international support to promote the peace process, and calling for the resumption and acceleration of negotiations between the Israeli and Palestinian sides towards a comprehensive resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict, on the basis of relevant Security Council resolutions and the terms of reference of the Madrid Conference, in order to ensure a political solution, with two States — Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous and viable Palestinian State — living side by side in peace and security,

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>6</sup>

*Expressing grave concern* about continuing violence against civilians,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;<sup>6</sup>
2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his rapid response and efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people;

<sup>5</sup> S/2003/529, annex.

<sup>6</sup> A/66/80-E/2011/111.

3. *Also expresses its appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people;

4. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories;

5. *Urges* Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions;

6. *Welcomes*, in this regard, the meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians in September 2010 and September 2011, and the outcome of the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, at which donors pledged approximately 4.5 billion United States dollars to support the needs of the Palestinian people;

7. *Recalls* the International Donors Conference for the Palestinian State, the Berlin Conference in Support of Palestinian Civil Security and the Rule of Law, and the Palestine Investment Conferences;

8. *Stresses* the importance of following up on the results of the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza;

9. *Calls upon* donors that have not yet converted their budget support pledges into disbursements to transfer funds as soon as possible, encourages all donors to increase their direct assistance to the Palestinian Authority in accordance with its government programme in order to enable it to build a viable and prosperous Palestinian State, underlines the need for equitable burden-sharing by donors in this effort, and encourages donors to consider aligning funding cycles with the Palestinian Authority's national budget cycle;

10. *Calls upon* relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in accordance with priorities set forth by the Palestinian side;

11. *Expresses its appreciation* for the work of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, and recognizes the vital role of the Agency in providing humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, particularly in the Gaza Strip;

12. *Calls upon* the international community to provide urgently needed assistance and services in an effort to alleviate the difficult humanitarian situation being faced by Palestinian women, children and their families and to help in the reconstruction and development of relevant Palestinian institutions;

13. *Stresses* the role that all funding instruments, including the European Commission's Palestinian-European Mechanism for the Management of Socio-Economic Aid and the World Bank trust fund, have been playing in directly assisting the Palestinian people;

14. *Urges* Member States to open their markets to exports of Palestinian products on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules, and to implement fully existing trade and cooperation agreements;

15. *Calls upon* the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs;

16. *Stresses*, in this context, the importance of ensuring free humanitarian access to the Palestinian people and the free movement of persons and goods;

17. *Also stresses* the need for the full implementation by both parties of the Agreement on Movement and Access and of the Agreed Principles for the Rafah Crossing, of 15 November 2005, to allow for the freedom of movement of the Palestinian civilian population, as well as for imports and exports, within and into and out of the Gaza Strip;

18. *Further stresses* the need to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian personnel, premises, facilities, equipment, vehicles and supplies, as well as the need to ensure safe and unhindered access by humanitarian personnel and delivery of supplies and equipment, in order to allow such personnel to efficiently perform their task of assisting affected civilian populations;

19. *Urges* the international donor community, United Nations agencies and organizations and non-governmental organizations to extend to the Palestinian people, as rapidly as possible, emergency economic assistance and humanitarian assistance, particularly in the Gaza Strip, to counter the impact of the current crisis;

20. *Stresses* the need for the continued implementation of the Paris Protocol on Economic Relations of 29 April 1994, fifth annex to the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, signed in Washington, D.C., on 28 September 1995,<sup>7</sup> including with regard to the full, prompt and regular transfer of Palestinian indirect tax revenues;

21. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution, containing:

(a) An assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people;

(b) An assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them;

22. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-seventh session the sub-item entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people".

*86th plenary meeting  
15 December 2011*

<sup>7</sup> A/51/889-S/1997/357, annex.



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
19 March 2013

Sixty-seventh session  
Agenda item 70 (b)

## Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 13 December 2012

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/67/L.38 and Add.1)]

### 67/86. Assistance to the Palestinian people

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 66/118 of 15 December 2011, as well as its previous resolutions on the question,

*Recalling also* the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993, by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,<sup>1</sup> and the subsequent implementation agreements concluded by the two sides,

*Recalling further* all relevant international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, and, in particular, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,<sup>2</sup> the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,<sup>2</sup> the Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>3</sup> and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,<sup>4</sup>

*Gravely concerned* at the difficult living conditions and humanitarian situation affecting the Palestinian people, in particular women and children, throughout the occupied Palestinian territory,

*Conscious* of the urgent need for improvement in the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied territory,

*Welcoming*, in this context, the development of projects, notably on infrastructure, to revive the Palestinian economy and improve the living conditions of the Palestinian people, stressing the need to create the appropriate conditions to facilitate the implementation of these projects, and noting the contribution of partners in the region and of the international community,

<sup>1</sup> A/48/486-S/26560, annex.

<sup>2</sup> See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.



*Aware* that development is difficult under occupation and is best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

*Noting* the great economic and social challenges facing the Palestinian people and their leadership,

*Emphasizing* the importance of the safety and well-being of all people, in particular women and children, in the whole Middle East region, the promotion of which is facilitated, inter alia, in a stable and secure environment,

*Deeply concerned* about the negative impact, including the health and psychological consequences, of violence on the present and future well-being of children in the region,

*Conscious* of the urgent necessity for international assistance to the Palestinian people, taking into account the Palestinian priorities,

*Expressing grave concern* about the humanitarian situation in Gaza, and underlining the importance of emergency and humanitarian assistance,

*Welcoming* the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993, the establishment of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians and the work being done by the World Bank as its secretariat and the establishment of the Consultative Group, as well as all follow-up meetings and international mechanisms established to provide assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Underlining* the importance of the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 2 March 2009, in addressing the immediate humanitarian situation in Gaza and in mobilizing donors to provide financial and political support for the Palestinian Authority in order to alleviate the socioeconomic and humanitarian situation being faced by the Palestinian people,

*Recalling* the International Donors Conference for the Palestinian State, held in Paris on 17 December 2007, the Berlin Conference in Support of Palestinian Civil Security and the Rule of Law, held on 24 June 2008, and the Palestine Investment Conferences, held in Bethlehem from 21 to 23 May 2008 and on 2 and 3 June 2010,

*Welcoming* the latest meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, held in Brussels on 21 March 2012 and in New York on 23 September 2012,

*Welcoming also* the activities of the Joint Liaison Committee, which provides a forum in which economic policy and practical matters related to donor assistance are discussed with the Palestinian Authority,

*Welcoming further* the implementation of the Palestinian National Development Plan 2011–2013 on governance, economy, social development and infrastructure, and stressing the need for continued international support for the Palestinian State-building process, as outlined in the summary of the Chair of the meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee held on 23 September 2012,

*Stressing* the need for the full engagement of the United Nations in the process of building Palestinian institutions and in providing broad assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Welcoming* recent steps to ease the restrictions on movement and access in the West Bank, while stressing the need for further steps to be taken in this regard, and

recognizing that such steps would improve living conditions and the situation on the ground and could promote further Palestinian economic development,

*Acknowledging* the measures announced by Israel regarding access to the Gaza Strip, while calling for full implementation and complementary measures that address the need for a fundamental change in policy that allows for the sustained and regular opening of the border crossings for the movement of persons and goods, including for the reconstruction and economic recovery of Gaza,

*Welcoming* the action of the Special Representative of the Quartet, Mr. Tony Blair, charged with developing, with the Government of the Palestinian Authority, a multi-year agenda to strengthen institutions, promote economic development and mobilize international funds,

*Stressing* the urgency of reaching a durable solution to the crisis in Gaza through the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1860 (2009) of 8 January 2009,

*Stressing also* the importance of the regular opening of the crossings for the movement of persons and goods, for both humanitarian and commercial flows,

*Noting* the active participation of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority in the activities of the Special Envoys of the Quartet,

*Welcoming* the endorsement by the Security Council, in resolution 1515 (2003) of 19 November 2003, of the performance-based road map to a permanent two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict,<sup>5</sup> and stressing the need for its implementation and compliance with its provisions,

*Commending* the efforts within the Quartet made by the United States of America, the European Union, the United Nations and the Russian Federation in pursuing vigorously a two-State solution, noting the commitment of the Quartet to remain actively involved and the need for strong international support to promote the peace process, and calling for the resumption and acceleration of negotiations between the Israeli and Palestinian sides towards a comprehensive resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict, on the basis of relevant Security Council resolutions and the terms of reference of the Madrid Conference, in order to ensure a political solution, with two States — Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous and viable Palestinian State — living side by side in peace and security,

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>6</sup>

*Expressing grave concern* about continuing violence against civilians,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;<sup>6</sup>
2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his rapid response and efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people;
3. *Also expresses its appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people;

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<sup>5</sup> S/2003/529, annex.

<sup>6</sup> A/67/84-E/2012/68.

4. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories;

5. *Urges* Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions;

6. *Welcomes*, in this regard, the meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians of 21 March 2012 and 23 September 2012 and the outcome of the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, at which donors pledged approximately 4.5 billion United States dollars to support the needs of the Palestinian people;

7. *Recalls* the International Donors Conference for the Palestinian State, the Berlin Conference in Support of Palestinian Civil Security and the Rule of Law, and the Palestine Investment Conferences;

8. *Stresses* the importance of following up on the results of the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza;

9. *Calls upon* donors that have not yet converted their budget support pledges into disbursements to transfer funds as soon as possible, encourages all donors to increase their direct assistance to the Palestinian Authority in accordance with its government programme in order to enable it to build a viable and prosperous Palestinian State, underlines the need for equitable burden-sharing by donors in this effort, and encourages donors to consider aligning funding cycles with the Palestinian Authority's national budget cycle;

10. *Calls upon* relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in accordance with priorities set forth by the Palestinian side;

11. *Expresses its appreciation* for the work of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, and recognizes the vital role of the Agency in providing humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, particularly in the Gaza Strip;

12. *Calls upon* the international community to provide urgently needed assistance and services in an effort to alleviate the difficult humanitarian situation being faced by Palestinian women, children and their families and to help in the reconstruction and development of relevant Palestinian institutions;

13. *Stresses* the role that all funding instruments, including the European Commission's Palestinian-European Mechanism for the Management of Socio-Economic Aid and the World Bank trust fund, have been playing in directly assisting the Palestinian people;

14. *Urges* Member States to open their markets to exports of Palestinian products on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules, and to implement fully existing trade and cooperation agreements;



15. *Calls upon* the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs;

16. *Stresses*, in this context, the importance of ensuring free humanitarian access to the Palestinian people and the free movement of persons and goods;

17. *Also stresses* the need for the full implementation by both parties of the Agreement on Movement and Access and of the Agreed Principles for the Rafah Crossing, of 15 November 2005, to allow for the freedom of movement of the Palestinian civilian population, as well as for imports and exports, within and into and out of the Gaza Strip;

18. *Further stresses* the need to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian personnel, premises, facilities, equipment, vehicles and supplies, as well as the need to ensure safe and unhindered access by humanitarian personnel and delivery of supplies and equipment, in order to allow such personnel to efficiently perform their task of assisting affected civilian populations;

19. *Urges* the international donor community, United Nations agencies and organizations and non-governmental organizations to extend to the Palestinian people, as rapidly as possible, emergency economic assistance and humanitarian assistance, particularly in the Gaza Strip, to counter the impact of the current crisis;

20. *Stresses* the need for the continued implementation of the Paris Protocol on Economic Relations of 29 April 1994, fifth annex to the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, signed in Washington, D.C., on 28 September 1995,<sup>7</sup> including with regard to the full, prompt and regular transfer of Palestinian indirect tax revenues;

21. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution, containing:

(a) An assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people;

(b) An assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them;

22. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-eighth session, under the item entitled “Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance”, the sub-item entitled “Assistance to the Palestinian people”.

*55th plenary meeting  
13 December 2012*

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<sup>7</sup> A/51/889-S/1997/357, annex.



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
18 February 2014

Sixty-eighth session  
Agenda item 70 (b)

## Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 13 December 2013

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/68/L.22 and Add.1)]

### 68/100. Assistance to the Palestinian people

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution [67/86](#) of 13 December 2012, as well as its previous resolutions on the question,

*Recalling also* the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993, by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,<sup>1</sup> and the subsequent implementation agreements concluded by the two sides,

*Recalling further* all relevant international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, and, in particular, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,<sup>2</sup> the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,<sup>2</sup> the Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>3</sup> and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,<sup>4</sup>

*Gravely concerned* at the difficult living conditions and humanitarian situation affecting the Palestinian people, in particular women and children, throughout the occupied Palestinian territory,

*Conscious* of the urgent need for improvement in the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied territory,

*Welcoming*, in this context, the development of projects, notably on infrastructure, to revive the Palestinian economy and improve the living conditions of the Palestinian people, stressing the need to create the appropriate conditions to facilitate the implementation of these projects, and noting the contribution of partners in the region and of the international community,

<sup>1</sup> A/48/486-S/26560, annex.

<sup>2</sup> See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.



*Aware* that development is difficult under occupation and is best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

*Noting* the great economic and social challenges facing the Palestinian people and their leadership,

*Emphasizing* the importance of the safety and well-being of all people, in particular women and children, in the whole Middle East region, the promotion of which is facilitated, inter alia, in a stable and secure environment,

*Deeply concerned* about the negative impact, including the health and psychological consequences, of violence on the present and future well-being of children in the region,

*Conscious* of the urgent necessity for international assistance to the Palestinian people, taking into account the Palestinian priorities,

*Expressing grave concern* about the humanitarian situation in Gaza, and underlining the importance of emergency and humanitarian assistance,

*Welcoming* the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993, the establishment of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians and the work being done by the World Bank as its secretariat and the establishment of the Consultative Group, as well as all follow-up meetings and international mechanisms established to provide assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Underlining* the importance of the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 2 March 2009, in addressing the immediate humanitarian situation in Gaza and in mobilizing donors to provide financial and political support for the Palestinian Authority in order to alleviate the socioeconomic and humanitarian situation being faced by the Palestinian people,

*Recalling* the International Donors' Conference for the Palestinian State, held in Paris on 17 December 2007, the Berlin Conference in Support of Palestinian Civil Security and the Rule of Law, held on 24 June 2008, and the Palestine Investment Conferences, held in Bethlehem from 21 to 23 May 2008 and on 2 and 3 June 2010,

*Welcoming* the latest meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, held in Brussels on 19 March 2013 and in New York on 25 September 2013,

*Welcoming also* the activities of the Joint Liaison Committee, which provides a forum in which economic policy and practical matters related to donor assistance are discussed with the Palestinian Authority,

*Welcoming further* the implementation of the Palestinian National Development Plan 2011–2013 on governance, economy, social development and infrastructure, and stressing the need for continued international support for the Palestinian State-building process, as outlined in the summary by the Chair of the meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee held on 25 September 2013,

*Stressing* the need for the full engagement of the United Nations in the process of building Palestinian institutions and in providing broad assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Welcoming* recent steps to ease the restrictions on movement and access in the West Bank, while stressing the need for further steps to be taken in this regard, and

recognizing that such steps would improve living conditions and the situation on the ground and could promote further Palestinian economic development,

*Acknowledging* the measures announced by Israel regarding access to the Gaza Strip, while calling for full implementation and complementary measures that address the need for a fundamental change in policy that allows for the sustained and regular opening of the border crossings for the movement of persons and goods, including for the reconstruction and economic recovery of Gaza,

*Welcoming* the action of the Special Representative of the Quartet, Mr. Tony Blair, charged with developing, with the Government of the Palestinian Authority, a multi-year agenda to strengthen institutions, promote economic development and mobilize international funds,

*Stressing* the urgency of reaching a durable solution to the crisis in Gaza through the full implementation of Security Council resolution [1860 \(2009\)](#) of 8 January 2009,

*Stressing also* the importance of the regular opening of the crossings for the movement of persons and goods, for both humanitarian and commercial flows,

*Noting* the active participation of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority in the activities of the Special Envoys of the Quartet,

*Welcoming* the endorsement by the Security Council, in resolution [1515 \(2003\)](#) of 19 November 2003, of the performance-based road map to a permanent two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict,<sup>5</sup> and stressing the need for its implementation and compliance with its provisions,

*Commending* the efforts within the Quartet made by the United States of America, the European Union, the United Nations and the Russian Federation in pursuing vigorously a two-State solution, noting the commitment of the Quartet to remain actively involved and the need for strong international support to promote the peace process, and calling for the resumption and acceleration of negotiations between the Israeli and Palestinian sides towards a comprehensive resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict, on the basis of relevant Security Council resolutions and the terms of reference of the Madrid Conference, in order to ensure a political solution, with two States – Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous and viable Palestinian State – living side by side in peace and security,

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>6</sup>

*Expressing grave concern* about continuing violence against civilians,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;<sup>6</sup>
2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his rapid response and efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people;
3. *Also expresses its appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people;

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<sup>5</sup> S/2003/529, annex.

<sup>6</sup> A/68/76-E/2013/65.

4. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories;

5. *Urges* Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions;

6. *Welcomes*, in this regard, the meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians of 19 March and 25 September 2013, and recalls the outcome of the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 2 March 2009, at which donors pledged approximately 4.5 billion United States dollars to support the needs of the Palestinian people;

7. *Recalls* the International Donors' Conference for the Palestinian State, held in Paris on 17 December 2007, the Berlin Conference in Support of Palestinian Civil Security and the Rule of Law, held on 24 June 2008, and the Palestine Investment Conferences, held in Bethlehem from 21 to 23 May 2008 and on 2 and 3 June 2010;

8. *Stresses* the importance of following up on the results of the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza;

9. *Calls upon* donors that have not yet converted their budget support pledges into disbursements to transfer funds as soon as possible, encourages all donors to increase their direct assistance to the Palestinian Authority in accordance with its government programme in order to enable it to build a viable and prosperous Palestinian State, underlines the need for equitable burden-sharing by donors in this effort, and encourages donors to consider aligning funding cycles with the Palestinian Authority's national budget cycle;

10. *Calls upon* relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in accordance with priorities set forth by the Palestinian side;

11. *Expresses its appreciation* for the work of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, and recognizes the vital role of the Agency in providing humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, particularly in the Gaza Strip;

12. *Calls upon* the international community to provide urgently needed assistance and services in an effort to alleviate the difficult humanitarian situation being faced by Palestinian women, children and their families and to help in the reconstruction and development of relevant Palestinian institutions;

13. *Stresses* the role that all funding instruments, including the European Commission's Palestinian-European Mechanism for the Management of Socioeconomic Aid and the World Bank trust fund, have been playing in directly assisting the Palestinian people;

14. *Urges* Member States to open their markets to exports of Palestinian products on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules, and to implement fully existing trade and cooperation agreements;

15. *Calls upon* the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs;

16. *Stresses*, in this context, the importance of ensuring free humanitarian access to the Palestinian people and the free movement of persons and goods;

17. *Also stresses* the need for the full implementation by both parties of the Agreement on Movement and Access and of the Agreed Principles for the Rafah Crossing, of 15 November 2005, to allow for the freedom of movement of the Palestinian civilian population, as well as for imports and exports, within and into and out of the Gaza Strip;

18. *Further stresses* the need to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian personnel, premises, facilities, equipment, vehicles and supplies, as well as the need to ensure safe and unhindered access by humanitarian personnel and the delivery of supplies and equipment, in order to allow such personnel to efficiently perform their task of assisting affected civilian populations;

19. *Urges* the international donor community, United Nations agencies and organizations and non-governmental organizations to extend to the Palestinian people, as rapidly as possible, emergency economic assistance and humanitarian assistance, particularly in the Gaza Strip, to counter the impact of the current crisis;

20. *Stresses* the need for the continued implementation of the Paris Protocol on Economic Relations of 29 April 1994, fifth annex to the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, signed in Washington, D.C., on 28 September 1995,<sup>7</sup> including with regard to the full, prompt and regular transfer of Palestinian indirect tax revenues;

21. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution, containing:

(a) An assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people;

(b) An assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them;

22. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-ninth session, under the item entitled “Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance”, the sub-item entitled “Assistance to the Palestinian people”.

*67th plenary meeting  
13 December 2013*

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<sup>7</sup> A/51/889-S/1997/357, annex.



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
30 January 2015

Sixty-ninth session  
Agenda item 69 (b)

## Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 19 December 2014

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/69/L.38 and Add.1)]

### 69/242. Assistance to the Palestinian people

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 68/100 of 13 December 2013, as well as its previous resolutions on the question,

*Recalling also* the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993, by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,<sup>1</sup> and the subsequent implementation agreements concluded by the two sides,

*Recalling further* all relevant international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, and, in particular, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,<sup>2</sup> the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,<sup>2</sup> the Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>3</sup> and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,<sup>4</sup>

*Gravely concerned* at the difficult living conditions and humanitarian situation affecting the Palestinian people, in particular women and children, throughout the occupied Palestinian territory, particularly in the Gaza Strip where economic recovery and vast infrastructure repair, rehabilitation and development are urgently needed, especially in the aftermath of the conflict of July and August 2014,

*Conscious* of the urgent need for improvement in the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied territory,

*Welcoming*, in this context, the development of projects, notably on infrastructure, to revive the Palestinian economy and improve the living conditions of the Palestinian people, stressing the need to create the appropriate conditions to facilitate the implementation of these projects, and noting the contribution of partners in the region and of the international community,

<sup>1</sup> A/48/486-S/26560, annex.

<sup>2</sup> See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.



*Aware* that development is difficult under occupation and is best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

*Noting* the great economic and social challenges facing the Palestinian people and their leadership,

*Emphasizing* the importance of the safety and well-being of all people, in particular women and children, in the whole Middle East region, the promotion of which is facilitated, inter alia, in a stable and secure environment,

*Deeply concerned* about the negative impact, including the health and psychological consequences, of violence on the present and future well-being of children in the region,

*Conscious* of the urgent necessity for international assistance to the Palestinian people, taking into account the Palestinian priorities, and recalling in this regard the National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan for Gaza,

*Expressing grave concern* about the grave humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip, and underlining the importance of emergency and humanitarian assistance and the need for the advancement of reconstruction in the Gaza Strip,

*Welcoming* the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993, the establishment of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians and the work being done by the World Bank as its secretariat and the establishment of the Consultative Group, as well as all follow-up meetings and international mechanisms established to provide assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Underlining* the importance of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, held on 12 October 2014, and urging the timely and full disbursement of pledges for expediting the provision of humanitarian assistance and the reconstruction process,

*Recalling* the International Donors' Conference for the Palestinian State, held in Paris on 17 December 2007, the Berlin Conference in Support of Palestinian Civil Security and the Rule of Law, held on 24 June 2008, the Palestine Investment Conferences, held in Bethlehem from 21 to 23 May 2008 and on 2 and 3 June 2010, and the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 2 March 2009,

*Welcoming* the ministerial meetings of the Conference on Cooperation among East Asian Countries for Palestinian Development, convened in Tokyo in February 2013 and in Jakarta in March 2014, as a forum for the mobilization of political and economic assistance, including through exchanges of expertise and lessons learned, in support of Palestinian development,

*Welcoming also* the latest meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, held in Brussels on 19 March 2013 and in New York on 25 September 2013 and 22 September 2014,

*Welcoming further* the activities of the Joint Liaison Committee, which provides a forum in which economic policy and practical matters related to donor assistance are discussed with the Palestinian Authority,

*Welcoming* the implementation of the Palestinian National Development Plan 2011–2013 on governance, economy, social development and infrastructure and the adoption of the Palestinian National Development Plan 2014–2016: State-building to Sovereignty, and stressing the need for continued international support for the



Palestinian State-building process, as outlined in the summary by the Chair of the meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee held on 22 September 2014,

*Stressing* the need for the full engagement of the United Nations in the process of building Palestinian institutions and in providing broad assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Recognizing*, in this regard, the positive contribution of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, which is aimed, inter alia, at enhancing developmental support and assistance to the Palestinian people and strengthening institutional capacity in line with Palestinian national priorities,

*Welcoming* steps to ease the restrictions on movement and access in the West Bank, while stressing the need for further steps to be taken in this regard, and recognizing that such steps would improve living conditions and the situation on the ground and could promote further Palestinian economic development,

*Welcoming also* the tripartite agreement facilitated by the United Nations regarding access to the Gaza Strip, and calling for its full implementation and for complementary measures that address the need for a fundamental change in policy that allows for the sustained and regular opening of the border crossings for the movement of persons and goods, including for humanitarian and commercial flows and for the reconstruction and economic recovery of Gaza,

*Stressing* that the situation in the Gaza Strip is unsustainable and that a durable ceasefire agreement must lead to a fundamental improvement in the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip and ensure the safety and well-being of civilians on both sides,

*Stressing also* the urgency of reaching a durable solution to the crisis in Gaza through the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1860 (2009) of 8 January 2009, including by preventing the illicit trafficking in arms and ammunition and by ensuring the sustained reopening of the crossing points on the basis of existing agreements, including the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access between the Palestinian Authority and Israel,

*Stressing*, in this regard, the importance of the effective exercise by the Palestinian Authority of its full government responsibilities in the Gaza Strip in all fields, including through its presence at the Gaza crossing points,

*Noting* the active participation of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority in the activities of the Special Envoys of the Quartet,

*Reaffirming* the necessity of achieving a comprehensive resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict in all its aspects, on the basis of relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973, 1397 (2002) of 12 March 2002, 1515 (2003) of 19 November 2003, 1850 (2008) of 16 December 2008 and 1860 (2009), as well as the terms of reference of the Madrid Conference and the principle of land for peace, in order to ensure a political solution, with two States — Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous, sovereign and viable Palestinian State — living side by side in peace and security and mutual recognition,

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>5</sup>

*Expressing grave concern* about continuing violence against civilians,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;<sup>5</sup>
2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his rapid response and ongoing efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people, including with regard to the emergency humanitarian needs in the Gaza Strip;
3. *Also expresses its appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people;
4. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories;
5. *Urges* Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions;
6. *Welcomes* the meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians of 19 March and 25 September 2013 and 22 September 2014, the outcome of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, held on 12 October 2014 and the generous donor response to support the needs of the Palestinian people, and urges the rapid disbursement of donor pledges;
7. *Stresses* the importance of following up on the results of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, to effectively promote economic recovery and reconstruction in a timely and sustainable manner;
8. *Calls upon* donors that have not yet converted their budget support pledges into disbursements to transfer funds as soon as possible, encourages all donors to increase their direct assistance to the Palestinian Authority in accordance with its government programme in order to enable it to build a viable and prosperous Palestinian State, underlines the need for equitable burden sharing by donors in this effort, and encourages donors to consider aligning funding cycles with the Palestinian Authority's national budget cycle;
9. *Calls upon* relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in accordance with priorities set forth by the Palestinian side;
10. *Expresses its appreciation* for the work of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, and recognizes the vital role of the Agency in providing humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, particularly in the Gaza Strip;

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<sup>5</sup> A/69/84-E/2014/75.

11. *Calls upon* the international community to provide urgently needed assistance and services in an effort to alleviate the difficult humanitarian situation being faced by Palestinian women, children and their families and to help in the reconstruction and development of relevant Palestinian institutions;

12. *Stresses* the role that all funding instruments, including the European Commission's Palestinian-European Mechanism for the Management of Socioeconomic Aid and the World Bank trust fund, have been playing in directly assisting the Palestinian people;

13. *Urges* Member States to open their markets to exports of Palestinian products on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules, and to implement fully existing trade and cooperation agreements;

14. *Calls upon* the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs;

15. *Stresses*, in this context, the importance of ensuring free humanitarian access to the Palestinian people and the free movement of persons and goods;

16. *Also stresses* the need for the full implementation by both parties of existing agreements, including the Agreement on Movement and Access and the Agreed Principles for the Rafah Crossing, of 15 November 2005, to allow for the freedom of movement of the Palestinian civilian population, as well as for imports and exports, within and into and out of the Gaza Strip;

17. *Further stresses* the need to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian personnel, premises, facilities, equipment, vehicles and supplies, as well as the need to ensure safe and unhindered access by humanitarian personnel and the delivery of supplies and equipment, in order to allow such personnel to efficiently perform their task of assisting affected civilian populations;

18. *Urges* the international donor community, United Nations agencies and organizations and non-governmental organizations to extend to the Palestinian people, as rapidly as possible, emergency economic assistance and humanitarian assistance, particularly in the Gaza Strip, to counter the impact of the current crisis;

19. *Stresses* the need for the continued implementation of the Paris Protocol on Economic Relations of 29 April 1994, fifth annex to the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, signed in Washington, D.C., on 28 September 1995,<sup>6</sup> including with regard to the full, prompt and regular transfer of Palestinian indirect tax revenues;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its seventieth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution, containing:

(a) An assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people;

(b) An assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them;

21. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventieth session, under the item entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and

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<sup>6</sup> A/51/889-S/1997/357, annex.

disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance”, the sub-item entitled “Assistance to the Palestinian people”.

*75th plenary meeting  
19 December 2014*

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# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
13 January 2016

Seventieth session  
Agenda item 73 (b)

## Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 10 December 2015

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/70/L.18 and Add.1)]

### 70/108. Assistance to the Palestinian people

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 69/242 of 19 December 2014, as well as its previous resolutions on the question,

*Recalling also* the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993, by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,<sup>1</sup> and the subsequent implementation agreements concluded by the two sides,

*Recalling further* all relevant international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, and, in particular, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,<sup>2</sup> the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,<sup>2</sup> the Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>3</sup> and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,<sup>4</sup>

*Gravely concerned* at the difficult living conditions and humanitarian situation affecting the Palestinian people, in particular women and children, throughout the occupied Palestinian territory, particularly in the Gaza Strip where economic recovery and vast infrastructure repair, rehabilitation and development are urgently needed, especially in the aftermath of the conflict of July and August 2014,

*Conscious* of the urgent need for improvement in the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied territory,

*Welcoming*, in this context, the development of projects, notably on infrastructure, to revive the Palestinian economy and improve the living conditions of the Palestinian people, stressing the need to create the appropriate conditions to facilitate the implementation of these projects, and noting the contribution of partners in the region and of the international community,

<sup>1</sup> A/48/486-S/26560, annex.

<sup>2</sup> See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.



*Aware* that development is difficult under occupation and is best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

*Noting* the great economic and social challenges facing the Palestinian people and their leadership,

*Emphasizing* the importance of the safety and well-being of all people, in particular women and children, in the whole Middle East region, the promotion of which is facilitated, inter alia, in a stable and secure environment,

*Deeply concerned* about the negative impact, including the health and psychological consequences, of violence on the present and future well-being of children in the region,

*Conscious* of the urgent necessity for international assistance to the Palestinian people, taking into account the Palestinian priorities, and recalling in this regard the National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan for Gaza,

*Expressing grave concern* about the grave humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip, and underlining the importance of emergency and humanitarian assistance and the need for the advancement of reconstruction in the Gaza Strip,

*Welcoming* the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993, the establishment of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians and the work being done by the World Bank as its secretariat and the establishment of the Consultative Group, as well as all follow-up meetings and international mechanisms established to provide assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Underlining* the importance of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, held on 12 October 2014, and urging the timely and full disbursement of pledges for expediting the provision of humanitarian assistance and the reconstruction process,

*Recalling* the International Donors' Conference for the Palestinian State, held in Paris on 17 December 2007, the Berlin Conference in Support of Palestinian Civil Security and the Rule of Law, held on 24 June 2008, the Palestine Investment Conferences, held in Bethlehem from 21 to 23 May 2008 and on 2 and 3 June 2010, and the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 2 March 2009,

*Welcoming* the ministerial meetings of the Conference on Cooperation among East Asian Countries for Palestinian Development, convened in Tokyo in February 2013 and in Jakarta in March 2014, as a forum for the mobilization of political and economic assistance, including through exchanges of expertise and lessons learned, in support of Palestinian development,

*Welcoming also* the latest meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, held in Brussels on 27 May 2015 and in New York on 25 September 2013, 22 September 2014 and 30 September 2015,

*Welcoming further* the activities of the Joint Liaison Committee, which provides a forum in which economic policy and practical matters related to donor assistance are discussed with the Palestinian Authority,

*Welcoming* the implementation of the Palestinian National Development Plan 2011–2013 on governance, economy, social development and infrastructure and the adoption of the Palestinian National Development Plan 2014–2016: State-building

to Sovereignty, and stressing the need for continued international support for the Palestinian State-building process, as outlined in the summary by the Chair of the meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee held on 22 September 2014,

*Stressing* the need for the full engagement of the United Nations in the process of building Palestinian institutions and in providing broad assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Recognizing*, in this regard, the positive contribution of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, which is aimed, inter alia, at enhancing developmental support and assistance to the Palestinian people and strengthening institutional capacity in line with Palestinian national priorities,

*Welcoming* steps to ease the restrictions on movement and access in the West Bank, while stressing the need for further steps to be taken in this regard, and recognizing that such steps would improve living conditions and the situation on the ground and could promote further Palestinian economic development,

*Welcoming also* the tripartite agreement facilitated by the United Nations regarding access to the Gaza Strip, and calling for its full implementation and for complementary measures that address the need for a fundamental change in policy that allows for the sustained and regular opening of the border crossings for the movement of persons and goods, including for humanitarian and commercial flows and for the reconstruction and economic recovery of Gaza,

*Stressing* that the situation in the Gaza Strip is unsustainable and that a durable ceasefire agreement must lead to a fundamental improvement in the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip and ensure the safety and well-being of civilians on both sides,

*Stressing also* the urgency of reaching a durable solution to the crisis in Gaza through the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1860 (2009) of 8 January 2009, including by preventing the illicit trafficking in arms and ammunition and by ensuring the sustained reopening of the crossing points on the basis of existing agreements, including the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access between the Palestinian Authority and Israel,

*Stressing*, in this regard, the importance of the effective exercise by the Palestinian Authority of its full government responsibilities in the Gaza Strip in all fields, including through its presence at the Gaza crossing points,

*Noting* the active participation of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority in the activities of the Special Envoys of the Quartet,

*Reaffirming* the necessity of achieving a comprehensive resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict in all its aspects, on the basis of relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973, 1397 (2002) of 12 March 2002, 1515 (2003) of 19 November 2003, 1850 (2008) of 16 December 2008 and 1860 (2009), as well as the terms of reference of the Madrid Conference and the principle of land for peace, in order to ensure a political solution, with two States – Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous, sovereign and viable Palestinian State – living side by side in peace and security and mutual recognition,

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>5</sup>

*Expressing grave concern* about continuing violence against civilians,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;<sup>5</sup>
2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his rapid response and ongoing efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people, including with regard to the emergency humanitarian needs in the Gaza Strip;
3. *Also expresses its appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people;
4. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories;
5. *Urges* Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions;
6. *Welcomes* the meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians of 25 September 2013, 22 September 2014 and 27 May and 30 September 2015, the outcome of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, held on 12 October 2014, and the generous donor response to support the needs of the Palestinian people, and urges the rapid disbursement of donor pledges;
7. *Stresses* the importance of following up on the results of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, to effectively promote economic recovery and reconstruction in a timely and sustainable manner;
8. *Calls upon* donors that have not yet converted their budget support pledges into disbursements to transfer funds as soon as possible, encourages all donors to increase their direct assistance to the Palestinian Authority in accordance with its government programme in order to enable it to build a viable and prosperous Palestinian State, underlines the need for equitable burden sharing by donors in this effort, and encourages donors to consider aligning funding cycles with the Palestinian Authority's national budget cycle;
9. *Calls upon* relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in accordance with priorities set forth by the Palestinian side;
10. *Expresses its appreciation* for the work of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, and recognizes the vital role of the Agency in providing humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, particularly in the Gaza Strip;

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<sup>5</sup> [A/70/76-E/2015/57](#).



11. *Calls upon* the international community to provide urgently needed assistance and services in an effort to alleviate the difficult humanitarian situation being faced by Palestinian women, children and their families and to help in the reconstruction and development of relevant Palestinian institutions;
12. *Stresses* the role that all funding instruments, including the European Commission's Palestinian-European Mechanism for the Management of Socioeconomic Aid and the World Bank trust fund, have been playing in directly assisting the Palestinian people;
13. *Urges* Member States to open their markets to exports of Palestinian products on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules, and to implement fully existing trade and cooperation agreements;
14. *Calls upon* the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs;
15. *Stresses*, in this context, the importance of ensuring free humanitarian access to the Palestinian people and the free movement of persons and goods;
16. *Also stresses* the need for the full implementation by both parties of existing agreements, including the Agreement on Movement and Access and the Agreed Principles for the Rafah Crossing, of 15 November 2005, to allow for the freedom of movement of the Palestinian civilian population, as well as for imports and exports, within and into and out of the Gaza Strip;
17. *Further stresses* the need to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian personnel, premises, facilities, equipment, vehicles and supplies, as well as the need to ensure safe and unhindered access by humanitarian personnel and delivery of supplies and equipment, in order to allow such personnel to efficiently perform their task of assisting affected civilian populations;
18. *Urges* the international donor community, United Nations agencies and organizations and non-governmental organizations to extend to the Palestinian people, as rapidly as possible, emergency economic assistance and humanitarian assistance, particularly in the Gaza Strip, to counter the impact of the current crisis;
19. *Stresses* the need for the continued implementation of the Paris Protocol on Economic Relations of 29 April 1994, fifth annex to the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, signed in Washington, D.C., on 28 September 1995,<sup>6</sup> including with regard to the full, prompt and regular transfer of Palestinian indirect tax revenues;
20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its seventy-first session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution, containing:
  - (a) An assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people;
  - (b) An assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them;

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<sup>6</sup> A/51/889-S/1997/357, annex.

21. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-first session, under the item entitled “Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance”, the sub-item entitled “Assistance to the Palestinian people”.

*72nd plenary meeting`  
10 December 2015*

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# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
23 January 2017

Seventy-first session  
Agenda item 69 (b)

## Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 8 December 2016

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/71/L.31 and Add.1)]

### 71/126. Assistance to the Palestinian people

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution [70/108](#) of 10 December 2015, as well as its previous resolutions on the question,

*Recalling also* the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993, by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,<sup>1</sup> and the subsequent implementation agreements concluded by the two sides,

*Recalling further* all relevant international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, and, in particular, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,<sup>2</sup> the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,<sup>2</sup> the Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>3</sup> and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,<sup>4</sup>

*Gravely concerned* at the difficult living conditions and humanitarian situation affecting the Palestinian people, in particular women and children, throughout the occupied Palestinian territory, particularly in the Gaza Strip where economic recovery and vast infrastructure repair, rehabilitation and development are urgently needed, especially in the aftermath of the conflict of July and August 2014,

*Conscious* of the urgent need for improvement in the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied territory,

*Welcoming*, in this context, the development of projects, notably on infrastructure, to revive the Palestinian economy and improve the living conditions of the Palestinian people, stressing the need to create the appropriate conditions to facilitate the implementation of these projects, and noting the contribution of partners in the region and of the international community,

<sup>1</sup> [A/48/486-S/26560](#), annex.

<sup>2</sup> See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.



*Aware* that development is difficult under occupation and is best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

*Noting* the great economic and social challenges facing the Palestinian people and their leadership,

*Emphasizing* the importance of the safety and well-being of all people, in particular women and children, in the whole Middle East region, the promotion of which is facilitated, inter alia, in a stable and secure environment,

*Deeply concerned* about the negative impact, including the health and psychological consequences, of violence on the present and future well-being of children in the region,

*Conscious* of the urgent necessity for international assistance to the Palestinian people, taking into account the Palestinian priorities, and recalling in this regard the National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan for Gaza,

*Expressing grave concern* about the grave humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip, and underlining the importance of emergency and humanitarian assistance and the need for the advancement of reconstruction in the Gaza Strip,

*Welcoming* the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993, the establishment of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians and the work being done by the World Bank as its secretariat and the establishment of the Consultative Group, as well as all follow-up meetings and international mechanisms established to provide assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Underlining* the importance of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, held on 12 October 2014, and urging the timely and full disbursement of pledges for expediting the provision of humanitarian assistance and the reconstruction process,

*Recalling* the International Donors' Conference for the Palestinian State, held in Paris on 17 December 2007, the Berlin Conference in Support of Palestinian Civil Security and the Rule of Law, held on 24 June 2008, and the Palestine Investment Conferences, held in Bethlehem from 21 to 23 May 2008 and on 2 and 3 June 2010, and the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 2 March 2009,

*Welcoming* the ministerial meetings of the Conference on Cooperation among East Asian Countries for Palestinian Development, convened in Tokyo in February 2013 and in Jakarta in March 2014, as a forum to mobilize political and economic assistance, including through exchanges of expertise and lessons learned, in support of Palestinian development,

*Welcoming also* the latest meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, held in Brussels on 27 May 2015 and in New York on 25 September 2013, 22 September 2014, 30 September 2015 and 19 September 2016,

*Welcoming further* the activities of the Joint Liaison Committee, which provides a forum in which economic policy and practical matters related to donor assistance are discussed with the Palestinian Authority,

*Welcoming* the implementation of the Palestinian National Development Plan 2011–2013 on governance, economy, social development and infrastructure and the adoption of the Palestinian National Development Plan 2014–2016: State-building

to Sovereignty, and stressing the need for continued international support for the Palestinian State-building process, as outlined in the summary by the Chair of the meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee held on 22 September 2014,

*Stressing* the need for the full engagement of the United Nations in the process of building Palestinian institutions and in providing broad assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Recognizing*, in this regard, the positive contribution of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, which is aimed, inter alia, at enhancing developmental support and assistance to the Palestinian people and strengthening institutional capacity in line with Palestinian national priorities,

*Welcoming* steps to ease the restrictions on movement and access in the West Bank, while stressing the need for further steps to be taken in this regard, and recognizing that such steps would improve living conditions and the situation on the ground and could promote further Palestinian economic development,

*Welcoming also* the tripartite agreement facilitated by the United Nations regarding access to the Gaza Strip, and calling for its full implementation and complementary measures that address the need for a fundamental change in policy that allows for the sustained and regular opening of the border crossings for the movement of persons and goods, including for humanitarian and commercial flows and for the reconstruction and economic recovery of Gaza,

*Stressing* that the situation in the Gaza Strip is unsustainable and that a durable ceasefire agreement must lead to a fundamental improvement in the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip and ensure the safety and well-being of civilians on both sides,

*Stressing also* the urgency of reaching a durable solution to the crisis in Gaza through the full implementation of Security Council resolution [1860 \(2009\)](#) of 8 January 2009, including by preventing the illicit trafficking in arms and ammunition and by ensuring the sustained reopening of the crossing points on the basis of existing agreements, including the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access between the Palestinian Authority and Israel,

*Stressing*, in this regard, the importance of the effective exercise by the Palestinian Authority of its full government responsibilities in the Gaza Strip in all fields, including through its presence at the Gaza crossing points,

*Noting* the active participation of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority in the activities of the Special Envoys of the Quartet,

*Reaffirming* the necessity of achieving a comprehensive resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict in all its aspects, on the basis of relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#) of 22 November 1967, [338 \(1973\)](#) of 22 October 1973, [1397 \(2002\)](#) of 12 March 2002, [1515 \(2003\)](#) of 19 November 2003, [1850 \(2008\)](#) of 16 December 2008 and [1860 \(2009\)](#), as well as the terms of reference of the Madrid Conference and the principle of land for peace, in order to ensure a political solution, with two States – Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous, sovereign and viable Palestinian State – living side by side in peace and security and mutual recognition,

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>5</sup>

*Expressing grave concern* about continuing violence against civilians,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;<sup>5</sup>
2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his rapid response and ongoing efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people, including with regard to the emergency humanitarian needs in the Gaza Strip;
3. *Also expresses its appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people;
4. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories;
5. *Urges* Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions;
6. *Welcomes* the meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians of 25 September 2013, 22 September 2014, 27 May and 30 September 2015 and 19 September 2016, the outcome of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, held on 12 October 2014, and the generous donor response to support the needs of the Palestinian people, and urges the rapid disbursement of donor pledges;
7. *Stresses* the importance of following up on the results of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza to effectively promote economic recovery and reconstruction in a timely and sustainable manner;
8. *Calls upon* donors that have not yet converted their budget support pledges into disbursements to transfer funds as soon as possible, encourages all donors to increase their direct assistance to the Palestinian Authority in accordance with its government programme in order to enable it to build a viable and prosperous Palestinian State, underlines the need for equitable burden sharing by donors in this effort, and encourages donors to consider aligning funding cycles with the Palestinian Authority's national budget cycle;
9. *Calls upon* relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in accordance with priorities set forth by the Palestinian side;
10. *Expresses its appreciation* for the work of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, and recognizes the vital role of the Agency in providing humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, particularly in the Gaza Strip;

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<sup>5</sup> [A/71/87-E/2016/67](#).

11. *Calls upon* the international community to provide urgently needed assistance and services in an effort to alleviate the difficult humanitarian situation being faced by Palestinian women, children and their families and to help in the reconstruction and development of relevant Palestinian institutions;

12. *Stresses* the role that all funding instruments, including the European Commission's Palestinian-European Mechanism for the Management of Socioeconomic Aid and the World Bank trust fund, have been playing in directly assisting the Palestinian people;

13. *Urges* Member States to open their markets to exports of Palestinian products on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules, and to implement fully existing trade and cooperation agreements;

14. *Calls upon* the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs;

15. *Stresses*, in this context, the importance of ensuring free humanitarian access to the Palestinian people and the free movement of persons and goods;

16. *Also stresses* the need for the full implementation by both parties of existing agreements, including the Agreement on Movement and Access and the Agreed Principles for the Rafah Crossing, of 15 November 2005, to allow for the freedom of movement of the Palestinian civilian population, as well as for imports and exports, within and into and out of the Gaza Strip;

17. *Further stresses* the need to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian personnel, premises, facilities, equipment, vehicles and supplies, as well as the need to ensure safe and unhindered access by humanitarian personnel and delivery of supplies and equipment, in order to allow such personnel to efficiently perform their task of assisting affected civilian populations;

18. *Urges* the international donor community, United Nations agencies and organizations and non-governmental organizations to extend to the Palestinian people, as rapidly as possible, emergency economic assistance and humanitarian assistance, particularly in the Gaza Strip, to counter the impact of the current crisis;

19. *Stresses* the need for the continued implementation of the Paris Protocol on Economic Relations of 29 April 1994, fifth annex to the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, signed in Washington, D.C., on 28 September 1995,<sup>6</sup> including with regard to the full, prompt and regular transfer of Palestinian indirect tax revenues;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution, containing:

(a) An assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people;

(b) An assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them;

21. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-second session, under the item entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian

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<sup>6</sup> A/51/889-S/1997/357, annex.

and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance”, the sub-item entitled “Assistance to the Palestinian people” .

*57th plenary meeting  
8 December 2016*

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Seventy-second session  
Agenda item 73 (b)

## Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 11 December 2017

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/72/L.25 and A/72/L.25/Add.1)]

### 72/134. Assistance to the Palestinian people

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution [71/126](#) of 8 December 2016, as well as its previous resolutions on the question,

*Recalling also* the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993, by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,<sup>1</sup> and the subsequent implementation agreements concluded by the two sides,

*Recalling further* all relevant international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, and, in particular, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,<sup>2</sup> the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,<sup>2</sup> the Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>3</sup> and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,<sup>4</sup>

*Gravely concerned* at the difficult living conditions and humanitarian situation affecting the Palestinian people, in particular women and children, throughout the occupied Palestinian territory, particularly in the Gaza Strip where economic recovery and vast infrastructure repair, rehabilitation and development are urgently needed, especially in the aftermath of the conflict of July and August 2014,

*Conscious* of the urgent need for improvement in the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied territory,

*Welcoming*, in this context, the development of projects, notably on infrastructure, to revive the Palestinian economy and improve the living conditions

<sup>1</sup> [A/48/486-S/26560](#), annex.

<sup>2</sup> See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.



of the Palestinian people, stressing the need to create the appropriate conditions to facilitate the implementation of these projects, and noting the contribution of partners in the region and of the international community,

*Aware* that development is difficult under occupation and is best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

*Noting* the great economic and social challenges facing the Palestinian people and their leadership,

*Emphasizing* the importance of the safety and well-being of all people, in particular women and children, in the whole Middle East region, the promotion of which is facilitated, inter alia, in a stable and secure environment,

*Deeply concerned* about the negative impact, including the health and psychological consequences, of violence on the present and future well-being of children in the region,

*Conscious* of the urgent necessity for international assistance to the Palestinian people, taking into account the Palestinian priorities, and recalling in this regard the National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan for Gaza,

*Expressing grave concern* about the grave humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip, and underlining the importance of emergency and humanitarian assistance and the need for the advancement of reconstruction in the Gaza Strip,

*Welcoming* the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993, the establishment of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians and the work being done by the World Bank as its secretariat and the establishment of the Consultative Group, as well as all follow-up meetings and international mechanisms established to provide assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Underlining* the importance of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, held on 12 October 2014, and urging the timely and full disbursement of pledges for expediting the provision of humanitarian assistance and the reconstruction process,

*Recalling* the International Donors' Conference for the Palestinian State, held in Paris on 17 December 2007, the Berlin Conference in Support of Palestinian Civil Security and the Rule of Law, held on 24 June 2008, and the Palestine Investment Conferences, held in Bethlehem from 21 to 23 May 2008 and on 2 and 3 June 2010, and the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 2 March 2009,

*Welcoming* the ministerial meetings of the Conference on Cooperation among East Asian Countries for Palestinian Development, convened in Tokyo in February 2013 and in Jakarta in March 2014, as a forum to mobilize political and economic assistance, including through exchanges of expertise and lessons learned, in support of Palestinian development,

*Welcoming also* the latest meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, held in Brussels on 27 May 2015 and in New York on 25 September 2013, 22 September 2014, 30 September 2015, 19 September 2016 and 18 September 2017,

*Welcoming further* the activities of the Joint Liaison Committee, which provides a forum in which economic policy and practical matters related to donor assistance are discussed with the Palestinian Authority,

*Welcoming* the implementation of the Palestinian National Development Plan 2011–2013 on governance, economy, social development and infrastructure and the adoption of the Palestinian National Development Plan 2014–2016: State-building to Sovereignty, and stressing the need for continued international support for the Palestinian State-building process, as outlined in the summary by the Chair of the meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee held on 22 September 2014,

*Stressing* the need for the full engagement of the United Nations in the process of building Palestinian institutions and in providing broad assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Recognizing*, in this regard, the positive contribution of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2014–2016, which is aimed, inter alia, at enhancing developmental support and assistance to the Palestinian people and strengthening institutional capacity in line with Palestinian national priorities,

*Welcoming* steps to ease the restrictions on movement and access in the West Bank, while stressing the need for further steps to be taken in this regard, and recognizing that such steps would improve living conditions and the situation on the ground and could promote further Palestinian economic development,

*Welcoming also* the tripartite agreement facilitated by the United Nations regarding access to the Gaza Strip, and calling for its full implementation and complementary measures that address the need for a fundamental change in policy that allows for the sustained and regular opening of the border crossings for the movement of persons and goods, including for humanitarian and commercial flows and for the reconstruction and economic recovery of Gaza,

*Stressing* that the situation in the Gaza Strip is unsustainable and that a durable ceasefire agreement must lead to a fundamental improvement in the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip and ensure the safety and well-being of civilians on both sides,

*Stressing also* the urgency of reaching a durable solution to the crisis in Gaza through the full implementation of Security Council resolution [1860 \(2009\)](#) of 8 January 2009, including by preventing the illicit trafficking in arms and ammunition and by ensuring the sustained reopening of the crossing points on the basis of existing agreements, including the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access between the Palestinian Authority and Israel,

*Stressing*, in this regard, the importance of the effective exercise by the Palestinian Authority of its full government responsibilities in the Gaza Strip in all fields, including through its presence at the Gaza crossing points,

*Noting* the active participation of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority in the activities of the Special Envoys of the Quartet,

*Reaffirming* the necessity of achieving a comprehensive resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict in all its aspects, on the basis of relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973, [1397 \(2002\)](#) of 12 March 2002, [1515 \(2003\)](#) of 19 November 2003, [1850 \(2008\)](#) of 16 December 2008 and [1860 \(2009\)](#), as well as the terms of reference of the Madrid Conference and the principle of land for peace, in order to ensure a political solution, with two States – Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous, sovereign and viable Palestinian State – living side by side in peace and security and mutual recognition,

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>5</sup>

*Expressing grave concern* about continuing violence against civilians,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;<sup>5</sup>
2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his rapid response and ongoing efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people, including with regard to the emergency humanitarian needs in the Gaza Strip;
3. *Also expresses its appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people;
4. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories;
5. *Urges* Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions;
6. *Welcomes* the meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians of 25 September 2013, 22 September 2014, 27 May and 30 September 2015, 19 September 2016 and 18 September 2017, the outcome of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, held on 12 October 2014, and the generous donor response to support the needs of the Palestinian people, and urges the rapid disbursement of donor pledges;
7. *Stresses* the importance of following up on the results of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza to effectively promote economic recovery and reconstruction in a timely and sustainable manner;
8. *Calls upon* donors that have not yet converted their budget support pledges into disbursements to transfer funds as soon as possible, encourages all donors to increase their direct assistance to the Palestinian Authority in accordance with its government programme in order to enable it to build a viable and prosperous Palestinian State, underlines the need for equitable burden sharing by donors in this effort, and encourages donors to consider aligning funding cycles with the Palestinian Authority's national budget cycle;
9. *Calls upon* relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in accordance with priorities set forth by the Palestinian side;
10. *Expresses its appreciation* for the work of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, and recognizes the vital role of the Agency in providing humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, particularly in the Gaza Strip;
11. *Calls upon* the international community to provide urgently needed assistance and services in an effort to alleviate the difficult humanitarian situation

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<sup>5</sup> [A/72/87-E/2017/67](#).

being faced by Palestinian women, children and their families and to help in the reconstruction and development of relevant Palestinian institutions;

12. *Stresses* the role that all funding instruments, including the European Commission's Palestinian-European Mechanism for the Management of Socioeconomic Aid and the World Bank trust fund, have been playing in directly assisting the Palestinian people;

13. *Urges* Member States to open their markets to exports of Palestinian products on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules, and to implement fully existing trade and cooperation agreements;

14. *Calls upon* the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs;

15. *Stresses*, in this context, the importance of ensuring free humanitarian access to the Palestinian people and the free movement of persons and goods;

16. *Also stresses* the need for the full implementation by both parties of existing agreements, including the Agreement on Movement and Access and the Agreed Principles for the Rafah Crossing, of 15 November 2005, to allow for the freedom of movement of the Palestinian civilian population, as well as for imports and exports, within and into and out of the Gaza Strip;

17. *Further stresses* the need to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian personnel, premises, facilities, equipment, vehicles and supplies, as well as the need to ensure safe and unhindered access by humanitarian personnel and delivery of supplies and equipment, in order to allow such personnel to efficiently perform their task of assisting affected civilian populations;

18. *Urges* the international donor community, United Nations agencies and organizations and non-governmental organizations to extend to the Palestinian people, as rapidly as possible, emergency economic assistance and humanitarian assistance, particularly in the Gaza Strip, to counter the impact of the current crisis;

19. *Stresses* the need for the continued implementation of the Paris Protocol on Economic Relations of 29 April 1994, fifth annex to the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, signed in Washington, D.C., on 28 September 1995,<sup>6</sup> including with regard to the full, prompt and regular transfer of Palestinian indirect tax revenues;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution, containing:

- (a) An assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people;
- (b) An assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them;

21. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-third session, under the item entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and

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<sup>6</sup> [A/51/889-S/1997/357](#), annex.

disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance”, the sub-item entitled “Assistance to the Palestinian people”.

*70th plenary meeting  
11 December 2017*

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# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
23 January 2019

Seventy-third session  
Agenda item 75 (b)

## Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 20 December 2018

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/73/L.69 and A/73/L.69/Add.1)]

### 73/256. Assistance to the Palestinian people

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 72/134 of 11 December 2017, as well as its previous resolutions on the question,

*Recalling also* the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993, by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,<sup>1</sup> and the subsequent implementation agreements concluded by the two sides,

*Recalling further* all relevant international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, and, in particular, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,<sup>2</sup> the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,<sup>2</sup> the Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>3</sup> and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,<sup>4</sup>

*Gravely concerned* at the difficult living conditions and humanitarian situation affecting the Palestinian people, in particular women and children, throughout the occupied Palestinian territory, particularly in the Gaza Strip where economic recovery and vast infrastructure repair, rehabilitation and development are urgently needed, especially in the aftermath of the conflict of July and August 2014,

*Conscious* of the urgent need for improvement in the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied territory,

*Welcoming*, in this context, the development of projects, notably on infrastructure, to revive the Palestinian economy and improve the living conditions

<sup>1</sup> A/48/486-S/26560, annex.

<sup>2</sup> See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.



of the Palestinian people, stressing the need to create the appropriate conditions to facilitate the implementation of these projects, and noting the contribution of partners in the region and of the international community,

*Aware* that development is difficult under occupation and is best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

*Noting* the great economic and social challenges facing the Palestinian people and their leadership,

*Emphasizing* the importance of the safety and well-being of all people, in particular women and children, in the whole Middle East region, the promotion of which is facilitated, inter alia, in a stable and secure environment,

*Deeply concerned* about the negative impact, including the health and psychological consequences, of violence on the present and future well-being of children in the region,

*Conscious* of the urgent necessity for international assistance to the Palestinian people, taking into account the Palestinian priorities, and recalling in this regard the National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan for Gaza,

*Expressing grave concern* about the grave humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip, and underlining the importance of emergency and humanitarian assistance and the need for the advancement of reconstruction in the Gaza Strip,

*Welcoming* the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993, the establishment of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians and the work being done by the World Bank as its secretariat and the establishment of the Consultative Group, as well as all follow-up meetings and international mechanisms established to provide assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Underlining* the importance of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, held on 12 October 2014, and urging the timely and full disbursement of pledges for expediting the provision of humanitarian assistance and the reconstruction process,

*Recalling* the International Donors' Conference for the Palestinian State, held in Paris on 17 December 2007, the Berlin Conference in Support of Palestinian Civil Security and the Rule of Law, held on 24 June 2008, and the Palestine Investment Conferences, held in Bethlehem from 21 to 23 May 2008 and on 2 and 3 June 2010, and the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, held in Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt, on 2 March 2009,

*Welcoming* the ministerial meetings of the Conference on Cooperation among East Asian Countries for Palestinian Development, convened in Tokyo in February 2013 and in Jakarta in March 2014, as a forum to mobilize political and economic assistance, including through exchanges of expertise and lessons learned, in support of Palestinian development,

*Welcoming also* the latest meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, held in Brussels on 27 May 2015 and in New York on 25 September 2013, 22 September 2014, 30 September 2015, 19 September 2016, 18 September 2017 and 27 September 2018,

*Welcoming further* the activities of the Joint Liaison Committee, which provides a forum in which economic policy and practical matters related to donor assistance are discussed with the Palestinian Authority,



*Welcoming* the implementation of the Palestinian National Development Plan 2011–2013 on governance, economy, social development and infrastructure and the adoption of the Palestinian National Development Plan 2014–2016: State-building to Sovereignty, and stressing the need for continued international support for the Palestinian State-building process, as outlined in the summary by the Chair of the meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee held on 22 September 2014,

*Stressing* the need for the full engagement of the United Nations in the process of building Palestinian institutions and in providing broad assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Recognizing*, in this regard, the positive contribution of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2014–2016, which is aimed, inter alia, at enhancing developmental support and assistance to the Palestinian people and strengthening institutional capacity in line with Palestinian national priorities,

*Welcoming* steps to ease the restrictions on movement and access in the West Bank, while stressing the need for further steps to be taken in this regard, and recognizing that such steps would improve living conditions and the situation on the ground and could promote further Palestinian economic development,

*Welcoming also* the tripartite agreement facilitated by the United Nations regarding access to the Gaza Strip, and calling for its full implementation and complementary measures that address the need for a fundamental change in policy that allows for the sustained and regular opening of the border crossings for the movement of persons and goods, including for humanitarian and commercial flows and for the reconstruction and economic recovery of Gaza,

*Stressing* that the situation in the Gaza Strip is unsustainable and that a durable ceasefire agreement must lead to a fundamental improvement in the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip and ensure the safety and well-being of civilians on both sides,

*Stressing also* the urgency of reaching a durable solution to the crisis in Gaza through the full implementation of Security Council resolution [1860 \(2009\)](#) of 8 January 2009, including by preventing the illicit trafficking in arms and ammunition and by ensuring the sustained reopening of the crossing points on the basis of existing agreements, including the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access between the Palestinian Authority and Israel,

*Stressing*, in this regard, the importance of the effective exercise by the Palestinian Authority of its full government responsibilities in the Gaza Strip in all fields, including through its presence at the Gaza crossing points,

*Noting* the active participation of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority in the activities of the Special Envoys of the Quartet,

*Reaffirming* the necessity of achieving a comprehensive resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict in all its aspects, on the basis of relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973, [1397 \(2002\)](#) of 12 March 2002, [1515 \(2003\)](#) of 19 November 2003, [1850 \(2008\)](#) of 16 December 2008 and [1860 \(2009\)](#), as well as the terms of reference of the Madrid Conference and the principle of land for peace, in order to ensure a political solution, with two States — Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous, sovereign and viable Palestinian State — living side by side in peace and security and mutual recognition,

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>5</sup>

*Expressing grave concern* about continuing violence against civilians,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;<sup>5</sup>
2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his rapid response and ongoing efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people, including with regard to the emergency humanitarian needs in the Gaza Strip;
3. *Also expresses its appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people;
4. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories;
5. *Urges* Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions;
6. *Welcomes* the meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians of 25 September 2013, 22 September 2014, 27 May and 30 September 2015, 19 September 2016, 18 September 2017 and 27 September 2018, the outcome of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, held on 12 October 2014, and the generous donor response to support the needs of the Palestinian people, and urges the rapid disbursement of donor pledges;
7. *Stresses* the importance of following up on the results of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza to effectively promote economic recovery and reconstruction in a timely and sustainable manner;
8. *Calls upon* donors that have not yet converted their budget support pledges into disbursements to transfer funds as soon as possible, encourages all donors to increase their direct assistance to the Palestinian Authority in accordance with its government programme in order to enable it to build a viable and prosperous Palestinian State, underlines the need for equitable burden sharing by donors in this effort, and encourages donors to consider aligning funding cycles with the Palestinian Authority's national budget cycle;
9. *Calls upon* relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in accordance with priorities set forth by the Palestinian side;
10. *Expresses its appreciation* for the work of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, and recognizes the vital role of the Agency in providing humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, particularly in the Gaza Strip;
11. *Calls upon* the international community to provide urgently needed assistance and services in an effort to alleviate the difficult humanitarian situation

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<sup>5</sup> A/73/84-E/2018/72.

being faced by Palestinian women, children and their families and to help in the reconstruction and development of relevant Palestinian institutions;

12. *Stresses* the role that all funding instruments, including the European Commission's Palestinian-European Mechanism for the Management of Socioeconomic Aid and the World Bank trust fund, have been playing in directly assisting the Palestinian people;

13. *Urges* Member States to open their markets to exports of Palestinian products on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules, and to implement fully existing trade and cooperation agreements;

14. *Calls upon* the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs;

15. *Stresses*, in this context, the importance of ensuring free humanitarian access to the Palestinian people and the free movement of persons and goods;

16. *Also stresses* the need for the full implementation by both parties of existing agreements, including the Agreement on Movement and Access and the Agreed Principles for the Rafah Crossing, of 15 November 2005, to allow for the freedom of movement of the Palestinian civilian population, as well as for imports and exports, within and into and out of the Gaza Strip;

17. *Further stresses* the need to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian personnel, premises, facilities, equipment, vehicles and supplies, as well as the need to ensure safe and unhindered access by humanitarian personnel and delivery of supplies and equipment, in order to allow such personnel to efficiently perform their task of assisting affected civilian populations;

18. *Urges* the international donor community, United Nations agencies and organizations and non-governmental organizations to extend to the Palestinian people, as rapidly as possible, emergency economic assistance and humanitarian assistance, particularly in the Gaza Strip, to counter the impact of the current crisis;

19. *Stresses* the need for the continued implementation of the Paris Protocol on Economic Relations of 29 April 1994, fifth annex to the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, signed in Washington, D.C., on 28 September 1995,<sup>6</sup> including with regard to the full, prompt and regular transfer of Palestinian indirect tax revenues;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution, containing:

(a) An assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people;

(b) An assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them;

21. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-fourth session, under the item entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance", the sub-item entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people".

*62nd plenary meeting  
20 December 2018*

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<sup>6</sup> [A/51/889-S/1997/357](#), annex.



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
16 January 2020

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## Seventy-fourth session

Agenda item 71 (b)

### **Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: assistance to the Palestinian people**

## **Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 16 December 2019**

[without reference to a Main Committee ([A/74/L.33](#) and [A/74/L.33/Add.1](#))]

### **74/117. Assistance to the Palestinian people**

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution [73/256](#) of 20 December 2018, as well as its previous resolutions on the question,

*Recalling also* the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993, by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,<sup>1</sup> and the subsequent implementation agreements concluded by the two sides,

*Recalling further* all relevant international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, and, in particular, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,<sup>2</sup> the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,<sup>2</sup> the Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>3</sup> and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,<sup>4</sup>

*Gravely concerned* at the difficult living conditions and humanitarian situation affecting the Palestinian people, in particular women and children, throughout the occupied Palestinian territory, particularly in the Gaza Strip where economic recovery and vast infrastructure repair, rehabilitation and development are urgently needed, especially in the aftermath of the conflict of July and August 2014,

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<sup>1</sup> [A/48/486-S/26560](#), annex.

<sup>2</sup> See resolution [2200 A \(XXI\)](#), annex.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.



*Conscious* of the urgent need for improvement in the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied territory,

*Welcoming*, in this context, the development of projects, notably on infrastructure, to revive the Palestinian economy and improve the living conditions of the Palestinian people, stressing the need to create the appropriate conditions to facilitate the implementation of these projects, and noting the contribution of partners in the region and of the international community,

*Aware* that development is difficult under occupation and is best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

*Noting* the great economic and social challenges facing the Palestinian people and their leadership,

*Emphasizing* the importance of the safety and well-being of all people, in particular women and children, in the whole Middle East region, the promotion of which is facilitated, inter alia, in a stable and secure environment,

*Deeply concerned* about the negative impact, including the health and psychological consequences, of violence on the present and future well-being of children in the region,

*Conscious* of the urgent necessity for international assistance to the Palestinian people, taking into account the Palestinian priorities, and recalling in this regard the National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan for Gaza,

*Expressing grave concern* about the grave humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip, and underlining the importance of emergency and humanitarian assistance and the need for the advancement of reconstruction in the Gaza Strip,

*Welcoming* the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993, the establishment of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians and the work being done by the World Bank as its secretariat and the establishment of the Consultative Group, as well as all follow-up meetings and international mechanisms established to provide assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Underlining* the importance of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, held on 12 October 2014, and urging the timely and full disbursement of pledges for expediting the provision of humanitarian assistance and the reconstruction process,

*Recalling* the International Donors' Conference for the Palestinian State, held in Paris on 17 December 2007, the Berlin Conference in Support of Palestinian Civil Security and the Rule of Law, held on 24 June 2008, and the Palestine Investment Conferences, held in Bethlehem from 21 to 23 May 2008 and on 2 and 3 June 2010, and the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 2 March 2009,

*Welcoming* the ministerial meetings of the Conference on Cooperation among East Asian Countries for Palestinian Development, convened in Tokyo in February 2013 and in Jakarta in March 2014, as a forum to mobilize political and economic assistance, including through exchanges of expertise and lessons learned, in support of Palestinian development,

*Welcoming also* the latest meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, held in Brussels on 27 May 2015 and in New York on 25 September 2013, 22 September 2014, 30 September 2015, 19 September 2016, 18 September 2017, 27 September 2018 and 26 September 2019,

*Welcoming further* the activities of the Joint Liaison Committee, which provides a forum in which economic policy and practical matters related to donor assistance are discussed with the Palestinian Authority,

*Welcoming* the implementation of the Palestinian National Development Plan 2011–2013 on governance, economy, social development and infrastructure and the adoption of the Palestinian National Development Plan 2014–2016: State-building to Sovereignty, and stressing the need for continued international support for the Palestinian State-building process, as outlined in the summary by the Chair of the meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee held on 22 September 2014,

*Stressing* the need for the full engagement of the United Nations in the process of building Palestinian institutions and in providing broad assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Recognizing*, in this regard, the positive contribution of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2014–2016, which is aimed, inter alia, at enhancing development support and assistance to the Palestinian people and strengthening institutional capacity in line with Palestinian national priorities,

*Welcoming* steps to ease the restrictions on movement and access in the West Bank, while stressing the need for further steps to be taken in this regard, and recognizing that such steps would improve living conditions and the situation on the ground and could promote further Palestinian economic development,

*Welcoming also* the tripartite agreement facilitated by the United Nations regarding access to the Gaza Strip, and calling for its full implementation and complementary measures that address the need for a fundamental change in policy that allows for the sustained and regular opening of the border crossings for the movement of persons and goods, including for humanitarian and commercial flows and for the reconstruction and economic recovery of Gaza,

*Stressing* that the situation in the Gaza Strip is unsustainable and that a durable ceasefire agreement must lead to a fundamental improvement in the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip and ensure the safety and well-being of civilians on both sides,

*Stressing also* the urgency of reaching a durable solution to the crisis in Gaza through the full implementation of Security Council resolution [1860 \(2009\)](#) of 8 January 2009, including by preventing the illicit trafficking in arms and ammunition and by ensuring the sustained reopening of the crossing points on the basis of existing agreements, including the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access between the Palestinian Authority and Israel,

*Stressing*, in this regard, the importance of the effective exercise by the Palestinian Authority of its full government responsibilities in the Gaza Strip in all fields, including through its presence at the Gaza crossing points,

*Noting* the active participation of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority in the activities of the Special Envoys of the Quartet,

*Reaffirming* the necessity of achieving a comprehensive resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict in all its aspects, on the basis of relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#) of 22 November 1967, [338 \(1973\)](#) of 22 October 1973, [1397 \(2002\)](#) of 12 March 2002, [1515 \(2003\)](#) of 19 November 2003, [1850 \(2008\)](#) of 16 December 2008 and [1860 \(2009\)](#), as well as the terms of reference of the Madrid

Conference and the principle of land for peace, in order to ensure a political solution, with two States – Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous, sovereign and viable Palestinian State – living side by side in peace and security and mutual recognition,

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>5</sup>

*Expressing grave concern* about continuing violence against civilians,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;<sup>5</sup>
2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his rapid response and ongoing efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people, including with regard to the emergency humanitarian needs in the Gaza Strip;
3. *Also expresses its appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people;
4. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories;
5. *Urges* Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions;
6. *Welcomes* the meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians of 25 September 2013, 22 September 2014, 27 May and 30 September 2015, 19 September 2016, 18 September 2017, 27 September 2018 and 26 September 2019, the outcome of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, held on 12 October 2014, and the generous donor response to support the needs of the Palestinian people, and urges the rapid disbursement of donor pledges;
7. *Stresses* the importance of following up on the results of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza to effectively promote economic recovery and reconstruction in a timely and sustainable manner;
8. *Calls upon* donors that have not yet converted their budget support pledges into disbursements to transfer funds as soon as possible, encourages all donors to increase their direct assistance to the Palestinian Authority in accordance with its government programme in order to enable it to build a viable and prosperous Palestinian State, underlines the need for equitable burden-sharing by donors in this effort, and encourages donors to consider aligning funding cycles with the Palestinian Authority's national budget cycle;
9. *Calls upon* relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in accordance with priorities set forth by the Palestinian side;
10. *Expresses its appreciation* for the work of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, and recognizes the vital role

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<sup>5</sup> [A/74/89-E/2019/73](#).



of the Agency in providing humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, particularly in the Gaza Strip;

11. *Calls upon* the international community to provide urgently needed assistance and services in an effort to alleviate the difficult humanitarian situation being faced by Palestinian women, children and their families and to help in the reconstruction and development of relevant Palestinian institutions;

12. *Stresses* the role that all funding instruments, including the European Commission's Palestinian-European Mechanism for the Management of Socioeconomic Aid and the World Bank trust fund, have been playing in directly assisting the Palestinian people;

13. *Urges* Member States to open their markets to exports of Palestinian products on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules, and to implement fully existing trade and cooperation agreements;

14. *Calls upon* the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs;

15. *Stresses*, in this context, the importance of ensuring free humanitarian access to the Palestinian people and the free movement of persons and goods;

16. *Also stresses* the need for the full implementation by both parties of existing agreements, including the Agreement on Movement and Access and the Agreed Principles for the Rafah Crossing, of 15 November 2005, to allow for the freedom of movement of the Palestinian civilian population, as well as for imports and exports, within and into and out of the Gaza Strip;

17. *Further stresses* the need to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian personnel, premises, facilities, equipment, vehicles and supplies, as well as the need to ensure safe and unhindered access by humanitarian personnel and delivery of supplies and equipment, in order to allow such personnel to efficiently perform their task of assisting affected civilian populations;

18. *Urges* the international donor community, United Nations agencies and organizations and non-governmental organizations to extend to the Palestinian people, as rapidly as possible, emergency economic assistance and humanitarian assistance, particularly in the Gaza Strip, to counter the impact of the current crisis;

19. *Stresses* the need for the continued implementation of the Paris Protocol on Economic Relations of 29 April 1994, fifth annex to the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, signed in Washington, D.C., on 28 September 1995,<sup>6</sup> including with regard to the full, prompt and regular transfer of Palestinian indirect tax revenues;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution, containing:

(a) An assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people;

(b) An assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them;

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<sup>6</sup> [A/51/889-S/1997/357](#), annex.



21. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-fifth session, under the item entitled “Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance”, the sub-item entitled “Assistance to the Palestinian people”.

*49th plenary meeting  
16 December 2019*

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# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
21 December 2020

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## Seventy-fifth session

Agenda item 73 (b)

**Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: assistance to the Palestinian people**

## Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 11 December 2020

[without reference to a Main Committee ([A/75/L.43](#) and [A/75/L.43/Add.1](#))]

### 75/126. Assistance to the Palestinian people

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution [74/117](#) of 16 December 2019, as well as its previous resolutions on the question,

*Recalling also* the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993, by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,<sup>1</sup> and the subsequent implementation agreements concluded by the two sides,

*Recalling further* all relevant international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, and, in particular, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,<sup>2</sup> the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,<sup>3</sup> the Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>4</sup> and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,<sup>5</sup>

*Gravely concerned* at the difficult living conditions and humanitarian situation affecting the Palestinian people, in particular women and children, throughout the occupied Palestinian territory, particularly in the Gaza Strip where economic recovery and vast infrastructure repair, rehabilitation and development are urgently needed, especially in the aftermath of the conflict of July and August 2014,

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<sup>1</sup> [A/48/486-S/26560](#), annex.

<sup>2</sup> See resolution [2200 A \(XXI\)](#), annex.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.



*Conscious* of the urgent need for improvement in the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied territory,

*Welcoming*, in this context, the development of projects, notably on infrastructure, to revive the Palestinian economy and improve the living conditions of the Palestinian people, stressing the need to create the appropriate conditions to facilitate the implementation of these projects, and noting the contribution of partners in the region and of the international community,

*Aware* that development is difficult under occupation and is best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

*Noting* the great economic and social challenges facing the Palestinian people and their leadership,

*Emphasizing* the importance of the safety and well-being of all people, in particular women and children, in the whole Middle East region, the promotion of which is facilitated, inter alia, in a stable and secure environment,

*Deeply concerned* about the negative impact, including the health and psychological consequences, of violence on the present and future well-being of children in the region,

*Conscious* of the urgent necessity for international assistance to the Palestinian people, taking into account the Palestinian priorities, and recalling in this regard the National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan for Gaza,

*Expressing grave concern* about the grave humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip, and underlining the importance of emergency and humanitarian assistance and the need for the advancement of reconstruction in the Gaza Strip,

*Welcoming* the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993, the establishment of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians and the work being done by the World Bank as its secretariat and the establishment of the Consultative Group, as well as all follow-up meetings and international mechanisms established to provide assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Underlining* the importance of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, held on 12 October 2014, and urging the timely and full disbursement of pledges for expediting the provision of humanitarian assistance and the reconstruction process,

*Recalling* the International Donors' Conference for the Palestinian State, held in Paris on 17 December 2007, the Berlin Conference in Support of Palestinian Civil Security and the Rule of Law, held on 24 June 2008, and the Palestine Investment Conferences, held in Bethlehem from 21 to 23 May 2008 and on 2 and 3 June 2010, and the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 2 March 2009,

*Welcoming* the ministerial meetings of the Conference on Cooperation among East Asian Countries for Palestinian Development, convened in Tokyo in February 2013 and in Jakarta in March 2014, as a forum to mobilize political and economic assistance, including through exchanges of expertise and lessons learned, in support of Palestinian development,

*Welcoming also* the latest meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, held in Brussels on 27 May 2015, in New York on 25 September 2013, 22 September 2014, 30 September 2015, 19 September 2016, 18 September 2017, 27 September 2018 and 26 September 2019 and by videoconference on 2 June 2020,

*Welcoming further* the activities of the Joint Liaison Committee, which provides a forum in which economic policy and practical matters related to donor assistance are discussed with the Palestinian Authority,

*Welcoming* the implementation of the Palestinian National Development Plan 2011–2013 on governance, economy, social development and infrastructure and the adoption of the Palestinian National Development Plan 2014–2016: State-building to Sovereignty, and stressing the need for continued international support for the Palestinian State-building process, as outlined in the summary by the Chair of the meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee held on 22 September 2014,

*Stressing* the need for the full engagement of the United Nations in the process of building Palestinian institutions and in providing broad assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Recognizing*, in this regard, the positive contribution of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2014–2016, which is aimed, inter alia, at enhancing developmental support and assistance to the Palestinian people and strengthening institutional capacity in line with Palestinian national priorities,

*Welcoming* steps to ease the restrictions on movement and access in the West Bank, while stressing the need for further steps to be taken in this regard, and recognizing that such steps would improve living conditions and the situation on the ground and could promote further Palestinian economic development,

*Welcoming also* the tripartite agreement facilitated by the United Nations regarding access to the Gaza Strip, and calling for its full implementation and complementary measures that address the need for a fundamental change in policy that allows for the sustained and regular opening of the border crossings for the movement of persons and goods, including for humanitarian and commercial flows and for the reconstruction and economic recovery of Gaza,

*Stressing* that the situation in the Gaza Strip is unsustainable and that a durable ceasefire agreement must lead to a fundamental improvement in the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip and ensure the safety and well-being of civilians on both sides,

*Stressing also* the urgency of reaching a durable solution to the crisis in Gaza through the full implementation of Security Council resolution [1860 \(2009\)](#) of 8 January 2009, including by preventing the illicit trafficking in arms and ammunition and by ensuring the sustained reopening of the crossing points on the basis of existing agreements, including the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access between the Palestinian Authority and Israel,

*Stressing*, in this regard, the importance of the effective exercise by the Palestinian Authority of its full government responsibilities in the Gaza Strip in all fields, including through its presence at the Gaza crossing points,

*Noting* the active participation of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority in the activities of the Special Envoys of the Quartet,

*Reaffirming* the necessity of achieving a comprehensive resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict in all its aspects, on the basis of relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#) of 22 November 1967, [338 \(1973\)](#) of 22 October 1973, [1397 \(2002\)](#) of 12 March 2002, [1515 \(2003\)](#) of 19 November 2003, [1850 \(2008\)](#) of 16 December 2008 and [1860 \(2009\)](#) of 8 January 2009, as well as the terms of reference of the Madrid Conference and the principle of land for peace, in order to ensure a political solution, with two States – Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous, sovereign and viable Palestinian State – living side by side in peace and security and mutual recognition,

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>6</sup>

*Expressing grave concern* about continuing violence against civilians,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;
2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his rapid response and ongoing efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people, including with regard to the emergency humanitarian needs in the Gaza Strip;
3. *Also expresses its appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people;
4. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories;
5. *Urges* Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions;
6. *Welcomes* the meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians of 25 September 2013, 22 September 2014, 27 May and 30 September 2015, 19 September 2016, 18 September 2017, 27 September 2018, 26 September 2019 and 2 June 2020, the outcome of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, held on 12 October 2014, and the generous donor response to support the needs of the Palestinian people, and urges the rapid disbursement of donor pledges;
7. *Stresses* the importance of following up on the results of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza to effectively promote economic recovery and reconstruction in a timely and sustainable manner;
8. *Calls upon* donors that have not yet converted their budget support pledges into disbursements to transfer funds as soon as possible, encourages all donors to increase their direct assistance to the Palestinian Authority in accordance with its government programme in order to enable it to build a viable and prosperous Palestinian State, underlines the need for equitable burden-sharing by donors in this effort, and encourages donors to consider aligning funding cycles with the Palestinian Authority's national budget cycle;
9. *Calls upon* relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in accordance with priorities set forth by the Palestinian side;
10. *Expresses its appreciation* for the work of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, and recognizes the vital role of the Agency in providing humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, particularly in the Gaza Strip;
11. *Calls upon* the international community to provide urgently needed assistance and services in an effort to alleviate the difficult humanitarian situation

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<sup>6</sup> [A/75/84-E/2020/61](#).

being faced by Palestinian women, children and their families and to help in the reconstruction and development of relevant Palestinian institutions;

12. *Stresses* the role that all funding instruments, including the European Commission's Palestinian-European Mechanism for the Management of Socioeconomic Aid and the World Bank trust fund, have been playing in directly assisting the Palestinian people;

13. *Urges* Member States to open their markets to exports of Palestinian products on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules, and to implement fully existing trade and cooperation agreements;

14. *Calls upon* the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs;

15. *Stresses*, in this context, the importance of ensuring free humanitarian access to the Palestinian people and the free movement of persons and goods;

16. *Also stresses* the need for the full implementation by both parties of existing agreements, including the Agreement on Movement and Access and the Agreed Principles for the Rafah Crossing, of 15 November 2005, to allow for the freedom of movement of the Palestinian civilian population, as well as for imports and exports, within and into and out of the Gaza Strip;

17. *Further stresses* the need to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian personnel, premises, facilities, equipment, vehicles and supplies, as well as the need to ensure safe and unhindered access by humanitarian personnel and delivery of supplies and equipment, in order to allow such personnel to efficiently perform their task of assisting affected civilian populations;

18. *Urges* the international donor community, United Nations agencies and organizations and non-governmental organizations to extend to the Palestinian people, as rapidly as possible, emergency economic assistance and humanitarian assistance, particularly in the Gaza Strip, to counter the impact of the current crisis;

19. *Stresses* the need for the continued implementation of the Paris Protocol on Economic Relations of 29 April 1994, fifth annex to the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, signed in Washington, D.C., on 28 September 1995,<sup>7</sup> including with regard to the full, prompt and regular transfer of Palestinian indirect tax revenues;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its seventy-sixth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution, containing:

- (a) An assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people;
- (b) An assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them;

21. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-sixth session, under the item entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance", the sub-item entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people".

*42nd plenary meeting  
11 December 2020*

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<sup>7</sup> [A/51/889-S/1997/357](#), annex.



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
17 December 2021

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## Seventy-sixth session

Agenda item 75 (b)

### **Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: assistance to the Palestinian people**

## **Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 10 December 2021**

[without reference to a Main Committee ([A/76/L.25](#) and [A/76/L.25/Add.1](#))]

### **76/126. Assistance to the Palestinian people**

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution [75/126](#) of 11 December 2020, as well as its previous resolutions on the question,

*Recalling also* the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993, by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,<sup>1</sup> and the subsequent implementation agreements concluded by the two sides,

*Recalling further* all relevant international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, and, in particular, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,<sup>2</sup> the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,<sup>3</sup> the Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>4</sup> and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,<sup>5</sup>

*Gravely concerned* at the difficult living conditions and humanitarian situation affecting the Palestinian people, in particular women and children, throughout the occupied Palestinian territory, particularly in the Gaza Strip where economic recovery

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<sup>1</sup> [A/48/486-S/26560](#), annex.

<sup>2</sup> See resolution [2200 A \(XXI\)](#), annex.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.



and vast infrastructure repair, rehabilitation and development are urgently needed, especially in the aftermath of the conflict of July and August 2014,

*Conscious* of the urgent need for improvement in the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied territory,

*Welcoming*, in this context, the development of projects, notably on infrastructure, to revive the Palestinian economy and improve the living conditions of the Palestinian people, stressing the need to create the appropriate conditions to facilitate the implementation of these projects, and noting the contribution of partners in the region and of the international community,

*Aware* that development is difficult under occupation and is best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

*Noting* the great economic and social challenges facing the Palestinian people and their leadership,

*Emphasizing* the importance of the safety and well-being of all people, in particular women and children, in the whole Middle East region, the promotion of which is facilitated, inter alia, in a stable and secure environment,

*Deeply concerned* about the negative impact, including the health and psychological consequences, of violence on the present and future well-being of children in the region,

*Conscious* of the urgent necessity for international assistance to the Palestinian people, taking into account the Palestinian priorities, and recalling in this regard the National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan for Gaza,

*Expressing grave concern* about the grave humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip, and underlining the importance of emergency and humanitarian assistance and the need for the advancement of reconstruction in the Gaza Strip,

*Welcoming* the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993, the establishment of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians and the work being done by the World Bank as its secretariat and the establishment of the Consultative Group, as well as all follow-up meetings and international mechanisms established to provide assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Underlining* the importance of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, held on 12 October 2014, and urging the timely and full disbursement of pledges for expediting the provision of humanitarian assistance and the reconstruction process,

*Recalling* the International Donors' Conference for the Palestinian State, held in Paris on 17 December 2007, the Berlin Conference in Support of Palestinian Civil Security and the Rule of Law, held on 24 June 2008, and the Palestine Investment Conferences, held in Bethlehem from 21 to 23 May 2008 and on 2 and 3 June 2010, and the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 2 March 2009,

*Welcoming* the ministerial meetings of the Conference on Cooperation among East Asian Countries for Palestinian Development, convened in Tokyo in February 2013 and in Jakarta in March 2014, as a forum to mobilize political and economic assistance, including through exchanges of expertise and lessons learned, in support of Palestinian development,

*Welcoming also* the latest meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, held in Brussels on



27 May 2015, in New York on 25 September 2013, 22 September 2014, 30 September 2015, 19 September 2016, 18 September 2017, 27 September 2018 and 26 September 2019, by videoconference on 2 June 2020 and on 23 February 2021 and in Oslo on 17 November 2021,

*Welcoming further* the activities of the Joint Liaison Committee, which provides a forum in which economic policy and practical matters related to donor assistance are discussed with the Palestinian Authority,

*Welcoming* the implementation of the Palestinian National Development Plan 2011–2013 on governance, economy, social development and infrastructure and the adoption of the Palestinian National Development Plan 2014–2016: State-building to Sovereignty, and stressing the need for continued international support for the Palestinian State-building process, as outlined in the summary by the Chair of the meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee held on 22 September 2014,

*Stressing* the need for the full engagement of the United Nations in the process of building Palestinian institutions and in providing broad assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Recognizing*, in this regard, the positive contribution of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2014–2016, which is aimed, inter alia, at enhancing developmental support and assistance to the Palestinian people and strengthening institutional capacity in line with Palestinian national priorities,

*Welcoming* steps to ease the restrictions on movement and access in the West Bank, while stressing the need for further steps to be taken in this regard, and recognizing that such steps would improve living conditions and the situation on the ground and could promote further Palestinian economic development,

*Welcoming also* the tripartite agreement facilitated by the United Nations regarding access to the Gaza Strip, and calling for its full implementation and complementary measures that address the need for a fundamental change in policy that allows for the sustained and regular opening of the border crossings for the movement of persons and goods, including for humanitarian and commercial flows and for the reconstruction and economic recovery of Gaza,

*Stressing* that the situation in the Gaza Strip is unsustainable and that a durable ceasefire agreement must lead to a fundamental improvement in the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip and ensure the safety and well-being of civilians on both sides,

*Stressing also* the urgency of reaching a durable solution to the crisis in Gaza through the full implementation of Security Council resolution [1860 \(2009\)](#) of 8 January 2009, including by preventing the illicit trafficking in arms and ammunition and by ensuring the sustained reopening of the crossing points on the basis of existing agreements, including the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access between the Palestinian Authority and Israel,

*Stressing*, in this regard, the importance of the effective exercise by the Palestinian Authority of its full government responsibilities in the Gaza Strip in all fields, including through its presence at the Gaza crossing points,

*Noting* the active participation of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority in the activities of the Special Envoys of the Quartet,

*Reaffirming* the necessity of achieving a comprehensive resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict in all its aspects, on the basis of relevant Security Council resolutions,

including resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#) of 22 November 1967, [338 \(1973\)](#) of 22 October 1973, [1397 \(2002\)](#) of 12 March 2002, [1515 \(2003\)](#) of 19 November 2003, [1850 \(2008\)](#) of 16 December 2008 and [1860 \(2009\)](#), as well as the terms of reference of the Madrid Conference and the principle of land for peace, in order to ensure a political solution, with two States – Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous, sovereign and viable Palestinian State – living side by side in peace and security and mutual recognition,

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>6</sup>

*Expressing grave concern* about continuing violence against civilians,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;
2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his rapid response and ongoing efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people, including with regard to the emergency humanitarian needs in the Gaza Strip;
3. *Also expresses its appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people;
4. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories;
5. *Urges* Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions;
6. *Welcomes* the meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians of 25 September 2013, 22 September 2014, 27 May and 30 September 2015, 19 September 2016, 18 September 2017, 27 September 2018, 26 September 2019, 2 June 2020 and 23 February and 17 November 2021, the outcome of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, held on 12 October 2014, and the generous donor response to support the needs of the Palestinian people, and urges the rapid disbursement of donor pledges;
7. *Stresses* the importance of following up on the results of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza to effectively promote economic recovery and reconstruction in a timely and sustainable manner;
8. *Calls upon* donors that have not yet converted their budget support pledges into disbursements to transfer funds as soon as possible, encourages all donors to increase their direct assistance to the Palestinian Authority in accordance with its government programme in order to enable it to build a viable and prosperous Palestinian State, underlines the need for equitable burden-sharing by donors in this effort, and encourages donors to consider aligning funding cycles with the Palestinian Authority's national budget cycle;

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<sup>6</sup> [A/76/78-E/2021/71](#).

9. *Calls upon* relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in accordance with priorities set forth by the Palestinian side;

10. *Expresses its appreciation* for the work of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, and recognizes the vital role of the Agency in providing humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, particularly in the Gaza Strip;

11. *Calls upon* the international community to provide urgently needed assistance and services in an effort to alleviate the difficult humanitarian situation being faced by Palestinian women, children and their families and to help in the reconstruction and development of relevant Palestinian institutions;

12. *Stresses* the role that all funding instruments, including the European Commission's Palestinian-European Mechanism for the Management of Socioeconomic Aid and the World Bank trust fund, have been playing in directly assisting the Palestinian people;

13. *Urges* Member States to open their markets to exports of Palestinian products on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules, and to implement fully existing trade and cooperation agreements;

14. *Calls upon* the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs;

15. *Stresses*, in this context, the importance of ensuring free humanitarian access to the Palestinian people and the free movement of persons and goods;

16. *Also stresses* the need for the full implementation by both parties of existing agreements, including the Agreement on Movement and Access and the Agreed Principles for the Rafah Crossing, of 15 November 2005, to allow for the freedom of movement of the Palestinian civilian population, as well as for imports and exports, within and into and out of the Gaza Strip;

17. *Further stresses* the need to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian personnel, premises, facilities, equipment, vehicles and supplies, as well as the need to ensure safe and unhindered access by humanitarian personnel and delivery of supplies and equipment, in order to allow such personnel to efficiently perform their task of assisting affected civilian populations;

18. *Urges* the international donor community, United Nations agencies and organizations and non-governmental organizations to extend to the Palestinian people, as rapidly as possible, emergency economic assistance and humanitarian assistance, particularly in the Gaza Strip, to counter the impact of the current crisis;

19. *Stresses* the need for the continued implementation of the Paris Protocol on Economic Relations of 29 April 1994, fifth annex to the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, signed in Washington, D.C., on 28 September 1995,<sup>7</sup> including with regard to the full, prompt and regular transfer of Palestinian indirect tax revenues;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its seventy-seventh session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution, containing:

(a) An assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people;

<sup>7</sup> A/51/889-S/1997/357, annex.

(b) An assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them;

21. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-seventh session, under the item entitled “Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance”, the sub-item entitled “Assistance to the Palestinian people”.

*51st plenary meeting  
10 December 2021*

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# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
8 December 2022

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## Seventy-seventh session

Agenda item 69 (b)

### **Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: assistance to the Palestinian people**

## **Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 6 December 2022**

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/77/L.34)]

### **77/30. Assistance to the Palestinian people**

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution [76/126](#) of 10 December 2021, as well as its previous resolutions on the question,

*Recalling also* the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993, by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,<sup>1</sup> and the subsequent implementation agreements concluded by the two sides,

*Recalling further* all relevant international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, and, in particular, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,<sup>2</sup> the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,<sup>3</sup> the Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>4</sup> and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,<sup>5</sup>

*Gravely concerned* at the difficult living conditions and humanitarian situation affecting the Palestinian people, in particular women and children, throughout the occupied Palestinian territory, particularly in the Gaza Strip where economic recovery

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<sup>1</sup> [A/48/486-S/26560](#), annex.

<sup>2</sup> See resolution [2200 A \(XXI\)](#), annex.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.



and vast infrastructure repair, rehabilitation and development are urgently needed, especially in the aftermath of the conflict of July and August 2014,

*Conscious* of the urgent need for improvement in the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied territory,

*Welcoming*, in this context, the development of projects, notably on infrastructure, to revive the Palestinian economy and improve the living conditions of the Palestinian people, stressing the need to create the appropriate conditions to facilitate the implementation of these projects, and noting the contribution of partners in the region and of the international community,

*Aware* that development is difficult under occupation and is best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

*Noting* the great economic and social challenges facing the Palestinian people and their leadership,

*Emphasizing* the importance of the safety and well-being of all people, in particular women and children, in the whole Middle East region, the promotion of which is facilitated, inter alia, in a stable and secure environment,

*Deeply concerned* about the negative impact, including the health and psychological consequences, of violence on the present and future well-being of children in the region,

*Conscious* of the urgent necessity for international assistance to the Palestinian people, taking into account the Palestinian priorities, and recalling in this regard the National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan for Gaza,

*Expressing grave concern* about the grave humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip, and underlining the importance of emergency and humanitarian assistance and the need for the advancement of reconstruction in the Gaza Strip,

*Welcoming* the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993, the establishment of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians and the work being done by the World Bank as its secretariat and the establishment of the Consultative Group, as well as all follow-up meetings and international mechanisms established to provide assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Underlining* the importance of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, held on 12 October 2014, and urging the timely and full disbursement of pledges for expediting the provision of humanitarian assistance and the reconstruction process,

*Recalling* the International Donors' Conference for the Palestinian State, held in Paris on 17 December 2007, the Berlin Conference in Support of Palestinian Civil Security and the Rule of Law, held on 24 June 2008, and the Palestine Investment Conferences, held in Bethlehem from 21 to 23 May 2008 and on 2 and 3 June 2010, and the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 2 March 2009,

*Welcoming* the ministerial meetings of the Conference on Cooperation among East Asian Countries for Palestinian Development, convened in Tokyo in February 2013 and in Jakarta in March 2014, as a forum to mobilize political and economic assistance, including through exchanges of expertise and lessons learned, in support of Palestinian development,

*Welcoming also* the latest meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, held in Brussels on

27 May 2015, in New York on 25 September 2013, 22 September 2014, 30 September 2015, 19 September 2016, 18 September 2017, 27 September 2018 and 26 September 2019, by videoconference on 2 June 2020 and on 23 February 2021, in Oslo on 17 November 2021, in Brussels on 10 May 2022 and in New York on 22 September 2022,

*Welcoming further* the activities of the Joint Liaison Committee, which provides a forum in which economic policy and practical matters related to donor assistance are discussed with the Palestinian Authority,

*Welcoming* the implementation of the Palestinian National Development Plan 2011–2013 on governance, economy, social development and infrastructure and the adoption of the Palestinian National Development Plan 2014–2016: State-building to Sovereignty, and stressing the need for continued international support for the Palestinian State-building process, as outlined in the summary by the Chair of the meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee held on 22 September 2014,

*Stressing* the need for the full engagement of the United Nations in the process of building Palestinian institutions and in providing broad assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Recognizing*, in this regard, the positive contribution of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2014–2016, which is aimed, inter alia, at enhancing developmental support and assistance to the Palestinian people and strengthening institutional capacity in line with Palestinian national priorities,

*Welcoming* steps to ease the restrictions on movement and access in the West Bank, while stressing the need for further steps to be taken in this regard, and recognizing that such steps would improve living conditions and the situation on the ground and could promote further Palestinian economic development,

*Welcoming also* the tripartite agreement facilitated by the United Nations regarding access to the Gaza Strip, and calling for its full implementation and complementary measures that address the need for a fundamental change in policy that allows for the sustained and regular opening of the border crossings for the movement of persons and goods, including for humanitarian and commercial flows and for the reconstruction and economic recovery of Gaza,

*Stressing* that the situation in the Gaza Strip is unsustainable and that a durable ceasefire agreement must lead to a fundamental improvement in the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip and ensure the safety and well-being of civilians on both sides,

*Stressing also* the urgency of reaching a durable solution to the crisis in Gaza through the full implementation of Security Council resolution [1860 \(2009\)](#) of 8 January 2009, including by preventing the illicit trafficking in arms and ammunition and by ensuring the sustained reopening of the crossing points on the basis of existing agreements, including the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access between the Palestinian Authority and Israel,

*Stressing*, in this regard, the importance of the effective exercise by the Palestinian Authority of its full government responsibilities in the Gaza Strip in all fields, including through its presence at the Gaza crossing points,

*Noting* the active participation of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority in the activities of the Special Envoys of the Quartet,

*Reaffirming* the necessity of achieving a comprehensive resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict in all its aspects, on the basis of relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#) of 22 November 1967, [338 \(1973\)](#) of 22 October 1973, [1397 \(2002\)](#) of 12 March 2002, [1515 \(2003\)](#) of 19 November 2003, [1850 \(2008\)](#) of 16 December 2008 and [1860 \(2009\)](#), as well as the terms of reference of the Madrid Conference and the principle of land for peace, in order to ensure a political solution, with two States – Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous, sovereign and viable Palestinian State – living side by side in peace and security and mutual recognition,

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>6</sup>

*Expressing grave concern* about continuing violence against civilians,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;
2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his rapid response and ongoing efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people, including with regard to the emergency humanitarian needs in the Gaza Strip;
3. *Also expresses its appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people;
4. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories;
5. *Urges* Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions;
6. *Welcomes* the meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians of 25 September 2013, 22 September 2014, 27 May and 30 September 2015, 19 September 2016, 18 September 2017, 27 September 2018, 26 September 2019, 2 June 2020, 23 February and 17 November 2021, 10 May and 22 September 2022 and the outcome of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, held on 12 October 2014, and the generous donor response to support the needs of the Palestinian people, and urges the rapid disbursement of donor pledges;
7. *Stresses* the importance of following up on the results of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza to effectively promote economic recovery and reconstruction in a timely and sustainable manner;
8. *Calls upon* donors that have not yet converted their budget support pledges into disbursements to transfer funds as soon as possible, encourages all donors to increase their direct assistance to the Palestinian Authority in accordance with its government programme in order to enable it to build a viable and prosperous Palestinian State, underlines the need for equitable burden-sharing by donors in this effort, and encourages donors to consider aligning funding cycles with the Palestinian Authority's national budget cycle;

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<sup>6</sup> [A/77/93-E/2022/67](#).



9. *Calls upon* relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in accordance with priorities set forth by the Palestinian side;

10. *Expresses its appreciation* for the work of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, and recognizes the vital role of the Agency in providing humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, particularly in the Gaza Strip;

11. *Calls upon* the international community to provide urgently needed assistance and services in an effort to alleviate the difficult humanitarian situation being faced by Palestinian women, children and their families and to help in the reconstruction and development of relevant Palestinian institutions;

12. *Stresses* the role that all funding instruments, including the European Commission's Palestinian-European Mechanism for the Management of Socioeconomic Aid and the World Bank trust fund, have been playing in directly assisting the Palestinian people;

13. *Urges* Member States to open their markets to exports of Palestinian products on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules, and to implement fully existing trade and cooperation agreements;

14. *Calls upon* the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs;

15. *Stresses*, in this context, the importance of ensuring free humanitarian access to the Palestinian people and the free movement of persons and goods;

16. *Also stresses* the need for the full implementation by both parties of existing agreements, including the Agreement on Movement and Access and the Agreed Principles for the Rafah Crossing, of 15 November 2005, to allow for the freedom of movement of the Palestinian civilian population, as well as for imports and exports, within and into and out of the Gaza Strip;

17. *Further stresses* the need to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian personnel, premises, facilities, equipment, vehicles and supplies, as well as the need to ensure safe and unhindered access by humanitarian personnel and delivery of supplies and equipment, in order to allow such personnel to efficiently perform their task of assisting affected civilian populations;

18. *Urges* the international donor community, United Nations agencies and organizations and non-governmental organizations to extend to the Palestinian people, as rapidly as possible, emergency economic assistance and humanitarian assistance, particularly in the Gaza Strip, to counter the impact of the current crisis;

19. *Stresses* the need for the continued implementation of the Paris Protocol on Economic Relations of 29 April 1994, fifth annex to the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, signed in Washington, D.C., on 28 September 1995,<sup>7</sup> including with regard to the full, prompt and regular transfer of Palestinian indirect tax revenues;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its seventy-eighth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution, containing:

(a) An assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people;

<sup>7</sup> [A/51/889-S/1997/357](#), annex.

(b) An assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them;

21. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-eighth session, under the item entitled “Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance”, the sub-item entitled “Assistance to the Palestinian people”.

*45th plenary meeting  
6 December 2022*

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**Seventy-eighth session**

Agenda item 72 (b)

**Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: assistance to the Palestinian people****Resolution adopted by the General Assembly  
on 8 December 2023***[without reference to a Main Committee (A/78/L.22)]***78/121. Assistance to the Palestinian people***The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution [77/30](#) of 6 December 2022, as well as its previous resolutions on the question,

*Recalling also* the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993, by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,<sup>1</sup> and the subsequent implementation agreements concluded by the two sides,

*Recalling further* all relevant international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, and, in particular, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,<sup>2</sup> the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,<sup>3</sup> the Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>4</sup> and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,<sup>5</sup>

*Gravely concerned* at the difficult living conditions and humanitarian situation affecting the Palestinian people, in particular women and children, throughout the occupied Palestinian territory, particularly in the Gaza Strip where economic recovery

<sup>1</sup> [A/48/486-S/26560](#), annex.

<sup>2</sup> See resolution [2200 A \(XXI\)](#), annex.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.



and vast infrastructure repair, rehabilitation and development are urgently needed, especially in the aftermath of the conflict of July and August 2014,

*Conscious* of the urgent need for improvement in the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied territory,

*Welcoming*, in this context, the development of projects, notably on infrastructure, to revive the Palestinian economy and improve the living conditions of the Palestinian people, stressing the need to create the appropriate conditions to facilitate the implementation of these projects, and noting the contribution of partners in the region and of the international community,

*Aware* that development is difficult under occupation and is best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

*Noting* the great economic and social challenges facing the Palestinian people and their leadership,

*Emphasizing* the importance of the safety and well-being of all people, in particular women and children, in the whole Middle East region, the promotion of which is facilitated, inter alia, in a stable and secure environment,

*Deeply concerned* about the negative impact, including the health and psychological consequences, of violence on the present and future well-being of children in the region,

*Conscious* of the urgent necessity for international assistance to the Palestinian people, taking into account the Palestinian priorities, and recalling in this regard the National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan for Gaza,

*Expressing grave concern* about the grave humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip, and underlining the importance of emergency and humanitarian assistance and the need for the advancement of reconstruction in the Gaza Strip,

*Welcoming* the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993, the establishment of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians and the work being done by the World Bank as its secretariat and the establishment of the Consultative Group, as well as all follow-up meetings and international mechanisms established to provide assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Underlining* the importance of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, held on 12 October 2014, and urging the timely and full disbursement of pledges for expediting the provision of humanitarian assistance and the reconstruction process,

*Recalling* the International Donors' Conference for the Palestinian State, held in Paris on 17 December 2007, the Berlin Conference in Support of Palestinian Civil Security and the Rule of Law, held on 24 June 2008, and the Palestine Investment Conferences, held in Bethlehem from 21 to 23 May 2008 and on 2 and 3 June 2010, and the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 2 March 2009,

*Welcoming* the ministerial meetings of the Conference on Cooperation among East Asian Countries for Palestinian Development, convened in Tokyo in February 2013 and in Jakarta in March 2014, as a forum to mobilize political and economic assistance, including through exchanges of expertise and lessons learned, in support of Palestinian development,

*Welcoming also* the latest meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, held in Brussels on

27 May 2015, in New York on 25 September 2013, 22 September 2014, 30 September 2015, 19 September 2016, 18 September 2017, 27 September 2018, 26 September 2019, by videoconference on 2 June 2020 and on 23 February 2021, in Oslo on 17 November 2021, in Brussels on 10 May 2022, in New York on 22 September 2022, in Brussels on 3 and 4 May 2023 and in New York on 20 September 2023,

*Welcoming further* the activities of the Joint Liaison Committee, which provides a forum in which economic policy and practical matters related to donor assistance are discussed with the Palestinian Authority,

*Welcoming* the implementation of the Palestinian National Development Plan 2011–2013 on governance, economy, social development and infrastructure and the adoption of the Palestinian National Development Plan 2014–2016: State-building to Sovereignty, and stressing the need for continued international support for the Palestinian State-building process, as outlined in the summary by the Chair of the meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee held on 22 September 2014,

*Stressing* the need for the full engagement of the United Nations in the process of building Palestinian institutions and in providing broad assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Recognizing*, in this regard, the positive contribution of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2014–2016, which is aimed, inter alia, at enhancing developmental support and assistance to the Palestinian people and strengthening institutional capacity in line with Palestinian national priorities,

*Welcoming* steps to ease the restrictions on movement and access in the West Bank, while stressing the need for further steps to be taken in this regard, and recognizing that such steps would improve living conditions and the situation on the ground and could promote further Palestinian economic development,

*Welcoming also* the tripartite agreement facilitated by the United Nations regarding access to the Gaza Strip, and calling for its full implementation and complementary measures that address the need for a fundamental change in policy that allows for the sustained and regular opening of the border crossings for the movement of persons and goods, including for humanitarian and commercial flows and for the reconstruction and economic recovery of Gaza,

*Stressing* that the situation in the Gaza Strip is unsustainable and that a durable ceasefire agreement must lead to a fundamental improvement in the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip and ensure the safety and well-being of civilians on both sides,

*Stressing also* the urgency of reaching a durable solution to the crisis in Gaza through the full implementation of Security Council resolution [1860 \(2009\)](#) of 8 January 2009, including by preventing the illicit trafficking in arms and ammunition and by ensuring the sustained reopening of the crossing points on the basis of existing agreements, including the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access between the Palestinian Authority and Israel,

*Stressing*, in this regard, the importance of the effective exercise by the Palestinian Authority of its full government responsibilities in the Gaza Strip in all fields, including through its presence at the Gaza crossing points,

*Noting* the active participation of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority in the activities of the Special Envoys of the Quartet,

*Reaffirming* the necessity of achieving a comprehensive resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict in all its aspects, on the basis of relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#) of 22 November 1967, [338 \(1973\)](#) of 22 October 1973, [1397 \(2002\)](#) of 12 March 2002, [1515 \(2003\)](#) of 19 November 2003, [1850 \(2008\)](#) of 16 December 2008 and [1860 \(2009\)](#), as well as the terms of reference of the Madrid Conference and the principle of land for peace, in order to ensure a political solution, with two States – Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous, sovereign and viable Palestinian State – living side by side in peace and security and mutual recognition,

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>6</sup>

*Expressing grave concern* about continuing violence against civilians,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;
2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his rapid response and ongoing efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people, including with regard to the emergency humanitarian needs in the Gaza Strip;
3. *Also expresses its appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people;
4. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories;
5. *Urges* Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions;
6. *Welcomes* the meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians of 25 September 2013, 22 September 2014, 27 May and 30 September 2015, 19 September 2016 and 18 September 2017, 27 September 2018, 26 September 2019, 2 June 2020, 23 February 2021, 17 November 2021, 10 May and 22 September 2022, and 3 and 4 May and 20 September 2023 and the outcome of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, held on 12 October 2014, and the generous donor response to support the needs of the Palestinian people, and urges the rapid disbursement of donor pledges;
7. *Stresses* the importance of following up on the results of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza to effectively promote economic recovery and reconstruction in a timely and sustainable manner;
8. *Calls upon* donors that have not yet converted their budget support pledges into disbursements to transfer funds as soon as possible, encourages all donors to increase their direct assistance to the Palestinian Authority in accordance with its government programme in order to enable it to build a viable and prosperous Palestinian State, underlines the need for equitable burden-sharing by donors in this

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<sup>6</sup> [A/78/86-E/2023/83](#).

effort, and encourages donors to consider aligning funding cycles with the Palestinian Authority's national budget cycle;

9. *Calls upon* relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in accordance with priorities set forth by the Palestinian side;

10. *Expresses its appreciation* for the work of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, and recognizes the vital role of the Agency in providing humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, particularly in the Gaza Strip;

11. *Calls upon* the international community to provide urgently needed assistance and services in an effort to alleviate the difficult humanitarian situation being faced by Palestinian women, children and their families and to help in the reconstruction and development of relevant Palestinian institutions;

12. *Stresses* the role that all funding instruments, including the European Commission's Palestinian-European Mechanism for the Management of Socioeconomic Aid and the World Bank trust fund, have been playing in directly assisting the Palestinian people;

13. *Urges* Member States to open their markets to exports of Palestinian products on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules, and to implement fully existing trade and cooperation agreements;

14. *Calls upon* the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs;

15. *Stresses*, in this context, the importance of ensuring free humanitarian access to the Palestinian people and the free movement of persons and goods;

16. *Also stresses* the need for the full implementation by both parties of existing agreements, including the Agreement on Movement and Access and the Agreed Principles for the Rafah Crossing, of 15 November 2005, to allow for the freedom of movement of the Palestinian civilian population, as well as for imports and exports, within and into and out of the Gaza Strip;

17. *Further stresses* the need to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian personnel, premises, facilities, equipment, vehicles and supplies, as well as the need to ensure safe and unhindered access by humanitarian personnel and delivery of supplies and equipment, in order to allow such personnel to efficiently perform their task of assisting affected civilian populations;

18. *Urges* the international donor community, United Nations agencies and organizations and non-governmental organizations to extend to the Palestinian people, as rapidly as possible, emergency economic assistance and humanitarian assistance, particularly in the Gaza Strip, to counter the impact of the current crisis;

19. *Stresses* the need for the continued implementation of the Paris Protocol on Economic Relations of 29 April 1994, fifth annex to the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, signed in Washington, D.C., on 28 September 1995,<sup>7</sup> including with regard to the full, prompt and regular transfer of Palestinian indirect tax revenues;

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<sup>7</sup> [A/51/889-S/1997/357](#), annex.

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its seventy-ninth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution, containing:

(a) An assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people;

(b) An assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them;

21. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-ninth session, under the item entitled “Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance”, the sub-item entitled “Assistance to the Palestinian people”.

*47th plenary meeting  
8 December 2023*

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# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
12 December 2024

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## Seventy-ninth session

Agenda item 72 (b)

### **Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: assistance to the Palestinian people**

## **Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 9 December 2024**

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/79/L.41)]

### **79/141. Assistance to the Palestinian people**

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolutions [77/30](#) of 6 December 2022 and [78/121](#) of 8 December 2023, as well as its previous resolutions on the question,

*Recalling also* the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993, by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,<sup>1</sup> and the subsequent implementation agreements concluded by the two sides,

*Recalling further* all relevant international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, and, in particular, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,<sup>2</sup> the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,<sup>3</sup> the Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>4</sup> and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,<sup>5</sup>

*Gravely concerned* at the difficult living conditions and humanitarian situation affecting the Palestinian people, in particular women and children, throughout the occupied Palestinian territory, particularly in the Gaza Strip where economic recovery and vast infrastructure repair, rehabilitation and development are urgently needed, especially in the aftermath of the conflict of July and August 2014,

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<sup>1</sup> [A/48/486-S/26560](#), annex.

<sup>2</sup> See resolution [2200 A \(XXI\)](#), annex.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.



*Conscious* of the urgent need for improvement in the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied territory,

*Welcoming*, in this context, the development of projects, notably on infrastructure, to revive the Palestinian economy and improve the living conditions of the Palestinian people, stressing the need to create the appropriate conditions to facilitate the implementation of these projects, and noting the contribution of partners in the region and of the international community,

*Aware* that development is difficult under occupation and is best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

*Noting* the great economic and social challenges facing the Palestinian people and their leadership,

*Emphasizing* the importance of the safety and well-being of all people, in particular women and children, in the whole Middle East region, the promotion of which is facilitated, inter alia, in a stable and secure environment,

*Deeply concerned* about the negative impact, including the health and psychological consequences, of violence on the present and future well-being of children in the region,

*Conscious* of the urgent necessity for international assistance to the Palestinian people, taking into account the Palestinian priorities, and recalling in this regard the National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan for Gaza,

*Expressing grave concern* about the grave humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip, and underlining the importance of emergency and humanitarian assistance and the need for the advancement of reconstruction in the Gaza Strip,

*Welcoming* the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993, the establishment of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians and the work being done by the World Bank as its secretariat and the establishment of the Consultative Group, as well as all follow-up meetings and international mechanisms established to provide assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Underlining* the importance of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, held on 12 October 2014, and urging the timely and full disbursement of pledges for expediting the provision of humanitarian assistance and the reconstruction process,

*Recalling* the International Donors' Conference for the Palestinian State, held in Paris on 17 December 2007, the Berlin Conference in Support of Palestinian Civil Security and the Rule of Law, held on 24 June 2008, and the Palestine Investment Conferences, held in Bethlehem from 21 to 23 May 2008 and on 2 and 3 June 2010, and the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 2 March 2009,

*Welcoming* the ministerial meetings of the Conference on Cooperation among East Asian Countries for Palestinian Development, convened in Tokyo in February 2013 and in Jakarta in March 2014, as a forum to mobilize political and economic assistance, including through exchanges of expertise and lessons learned, in support of Palestinian development,

*Welcoming also* the latest meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, held in New York on 25 September 2013 and 22 September 2014, in Brussels on 27 May 2015, in New York on 30 September 2015, 19 September 2016, 18 September 2017, 27 September

2018, 26 September 2019, via videoconference on 2 June 2020 and on 23 February 2021, in Oslo on 17 November 2021, in Brussels on 10 May 2022, in New York on 22 September 2022, in Brussels on 3 and 4 May 2023 and in New York on 20 September 2023 and 26 September 2024,

*Welcoming further* the activities of the Joint Liaison Committee, which provides a forum in which economic policy and practical matters related to donor assistance are discussed with the Palestinian Authority,

*Welcoming* the implementation of the Palestinian National Development Plan 2011–2013 on governance, economy, social development and infrastructure and the adoption of the Palestinian National Development Plan 2014–2016: State-building to Sovereignty, and stressing the need for continued international support for the Palestinian State-building process, as outlined in the summary by the Chair of the meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee held on 22 September 2014,

*Stressing* the need for the full engagement of the United Nations in the process of building Palestinian institutions and in providing broad assistance to the Palestinian people,

*Recognizing*, in this regard, the positive contribution of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2014–2016, which is aimed, inter alia, at enhancing developmental support and assistance to the Palestinian people and strengthening institutional capacity in line with Palestinian national priorities,

*Welcoming* steps to ease the restrictions on movement and access in the West Bank, while stressing the need for further steps to be taken in this regard, and recognizing that such steps would improve living conditions and the situation on the ground and could promote further Palestinian economic development,

*Welcoming also* the tripartite agreement facilitated by the United Nations regarding access to the Gaza Strip, and calling for its full implementation and complementary measures that address the need for a fundamental change in policy that allows for the sustained and regular opening of the border crossings for the movement of persons and goods, including for humanitarian and commercial flows and for the reconstruction and economic recovery of Gaza,

*Stressing* that the situation in the Gaza Strip is unsustainable and that a durable ceasefire agreement must lead to a fundamental improvement in the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip and ensure the safety and well-being of civilians on both sides,

*Stressing also* the urgency of reaching a durable solution to the crisis in Gaza through the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1860 (2009) of 8 January 2009, including by preventing the illicit trafficking in arms and ammunition and by ensuring the sustained reopening of the crossing points on the basis of existing agreements, including the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access between the Palestinian Authority and Israel,

*Stressing*, in this regard, the importance of the effective exercise by the Palestinian Authority of its full government responsibilities in the Gaza Strip in all fields, including through its presence at the Gaza crossing points,

*Noting* the active participation of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority in the activities of the Special Envoys of the Quartet,

*Reaffirming* the necessity of achieving a comprehensive resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict in all its aspects, on the basis of relevant Security Council resolutions,

including resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973, 1397 (2002) of 12 March 2002, 1515 (2003) of 19 November 2003, 1850 (2008) of 16 December 2008 and 1860 (2009), as well as the terms of reference of the Madrid Conference and the principle of land for peace, in order to ensure a political solution, with two States – Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous, sovereign and viable Palestinian State – living side by side in peace and security and mutual recognition,

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>6</sup>

*Expressing grave concern* about continuing violence against civilians,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;
2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his rapid response and ongoing efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people, including with regard to the emergency humanitarian needs in the Gaza Strip;
3. *Also expresses its appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people;
4. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories;
5. *Urges* Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions;
6. *Welcomes* the meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians of 25 September 2013, 22 September 2014, 27 May and 30 September 2015, 19 September 2016, 18 September 2017, 27 September 2018, 26 September 2019, 2 June 2020, 23 February and 17 November 2021, 10 May and 22 September 2022, 3 and 4 May and 20 September 2023 and 26 September 2024 and the outcome of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, held on 12 October 2014, and the generous donor response to support the needs of the Palestinian people, and urges the rapid disbursement of donor pledges;
7. *Stresses* the importance of following up on the results of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza to effectively promote economic recovery and reconstruction in a timely and sustainable manner;
8. *Calls upon* donors that have not yet converted their budget support pledges into disbursements to transfer funds as soon as possible, encourages all donors to increase their direct assistance to the Palestinian Authority in accordance with its government programme in order to enable it to build a viable and prosperous Palestinian State, underlines the need for equitable burden-sharing by donors in this effort, and encourages donors to consider aligning funding cycles with the Palestinian Authority's national budget cycle;

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<sup>6</sup> A/79/85-E/2024/60.

9. *Calls upon* relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in accordance with priorities set forth by the Palestinian side;

10. *Expresses its appreciation* for the work of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, and recognizes the vital role of the Agency in providing humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, particularly in the Gaza Strip;

11. *Calls upon* the international community to provide urgently needed assistance and services in an effort to alleviate the difficult humanitarian situation being faced by Palestinian women, children and their families and to help in the reconstruction and development of relevant Palestinian institutions;

12. *Stresses* the role that all funding instruments, including the European Commission's Palestinian-European Mechanism for the Management of Socioeconomic Aid and the World Bank trust fund, have been playing in directly assisting the Palestinian people;

13. *Urges* Member States to open their markets to exports of Palestinian products on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules, and to implement fully existing trade and cooperation agreements;

14. *Calls upon* the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs;

15. *Stresses*, in this context, the importance of ensuring free humanitarian access to the Palestinian people and the free movement of persons and goods;

16. *Also stresses* the need for the full implementation by both parties of existing agreements, including the Agreement on Movement and Access and the Agreed Principles for the Rafah Crossing, of 15 November 2005, to allow for the freedom of movement of the Palestinian civilian population, as well as for imports and exports, within and into and out of the Gaza Strip;

17. *Further stresses* the need to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian personnel, premises, facilities, equipment, vehicles and supplies, as well as the need to ensure safe and unhindered access by humanitarian personnel and delivery of supplies and equipment, in order to allow such personnel to efficiently perform their task of assisting affected civilian populations;

18. *Urges* the international donor community, United Nations agencies and organizations and non-governmental organizations to extend to the Palestinian people, as rapidly as possible, emergency economic assistance and humanitarian assistance, particularly in the Gaza Strip, to counter the impact of the current crisis;

19. *Stresses* the need for the continued implementation of the Paris Protocol on Economic Relations of 29 April 1994, fifth annex to the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, signed in Washington, D.C., on 28 September 1995,<sup>7</sup> including with regard to the full, prompt and regular transfer of Palestinian indirect tax revenues;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its eightieth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution, containing:

(a) An assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people;

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<sup>7</sup> [A/51/889-S/1997/357](#), annex.

(b) An assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them;

21. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its eightieth session, under the item entitled “Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance”, the sub-item entitled “Assistance to the Palestinian people”.

*50th plenary meeting  
9 December 2024*



UNITED NATIONS  
GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY



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Thirty-fifth session  
Item 12 of the preliminary list\*

REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Assistance to the Palestinian people

Report of the Secretary-General

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\* A/35/50.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 2026 (LXI) of 4 August 1976, the Economic and Social Council invited the United Nations Development Programme, the specialized agencies and other organizations within the United Nations system to intensify their efforts in identifying the social and economic needs of the Palestinian people. It also requested the agencies and organizations to consult and co-operate with the Palestine Liberation Organization with a view to establishing and implementing concrete projects to ensure the improvement of the social and economic conditions of the Palestinian people.
2. The Council, in its resolution 2100 (LXIII) of 3 August 1977, reiterated its earlier resolution and requested the Secretary-General to submit annual reports to the Council on the matter.
3. The General Assembly, in its resolution 34/133 of 14 December 1979, urged bodies of the United Nations system to take the necessary steps for the full implementation of Council resolutions 2026 (LXI) and 2100 (LXIII) and requested the Secretary-General to report to the Council and to the Assembly at its thirty-fifth session on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution.
4. This report contains information received from organizations on action taken by them in implementation of the above resolutions. Information received from other organizations at a later date will be issued as an addendum to this report.

## II. ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA

5. As a follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolution 2100 (LXIII) concerning assistance to the Palestinian people, activities of the Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA) covering the period 1979 included the projects discussed below.
6. A study of the economic and social situation and potential of the Palestinian Arab people was initiated in April 1979. The study employed two information-gathering strategies:
  - (a) Library research, including consulting the extensive literature available from official and non-official sources;
  - (b) Original research involving field surveys based on sampling.

Activities to date have used both strategies. Library research, initially concentrating on Palestine before 1948 in order to establish a base against which to evaluate the present situation, is continuing; the research for the pre-1948 period in Palestine has been completed. A technical file for the planned field surveys has also been essentially completed.

7. Furthermore, ECWA participated in the Interagency Task Force on assistance to the Palestinian people from 14 March to 11 April 1979. It contributed to

writing the final report, which was considered by the United Nations Development Programme Interagency Meeting, in which it also participated, on implementation of General Assembly resolution 33/147.

8. In the field of the integration of women in development, ECWA adopted, at its fifth session, in October 1978, the Regional Plan of Action for the Integration of Women in Development in the ECWA region. 1/ The Regional Plan includes a chapter on the Palestinian woman as a primary priority in the region. The Plan refers to Council resolutions 2026 (LXI) and 2100 (LXIII) dealing with identification of needs of the Palestinian people and relevant concrete projects and proposals, as well as various activities inside and outside the occupied territories.

9. Through the assistance of the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women, a Training Workshop for House-mothers/Teachers/ and Administrators of As-Smoud House was held at Beirut from 14 May to 15 June 1979 in co-operation with the General Union of Palestinian Women. The Union also participated in the Voluntary Fund Workshop on National Development Planning for the Integration of Women in Development, organized by ECWA in co-operation with the Institute for Economic and Social Planning and held at Damascus, from 10 to 23 December 1979. An additional project benefiting Palestinian woman and entitled "Skill Development in Integrated Social Work for Non-Governmental Organizations" is scheduled for implementation during 1980.

10. Within the context of the preparations for the 1980 World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women, ECWA held a regional preparatory meeting at Damascus from 10 to 13 December 1979. Two reports, prepared by ECWA, were adopted by the meeting. They are entitled: "The social and economic conditions of the Palestinian woman inside and outside the occupied territories" (A/CONF.94/21) and "Special measures of assistance to the Palestinian woman" (A/CONF.94/4). These reports will be included in the global review and evaluation being prepared for the World Conference. Decisions of this regional meeting will also be considered by ECWA at its seventh session to be held at Baghdad in April 1980. Furthermore, and in line with the Regional Plan of Action for the Integration of Women in Development in the ECWA region, the General Assembly, by its resolution 34/160 of 17 December 1979, decided to include in the provisional agenda of the World Conference an item entitled: "Effects of Israeli occupation on Palestinian women inside and outside the occupied territories:

"(a) Review of the social and economic needs of Palestinian women;

"(b) Special measures for assistance to Palestinian women inside and outside the occupied territories".

11. Within the context of assistance to the Palestinian people and as a follow-up to ECWA resolution 28 (III) on a census of the Palestinian Arab people, 2/

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1/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1979, Supplement No. 14 (E/1979/49), chap. III, resolution 66 (V).

2/ Ibid., Sixty-first Session, Supplement No. 12 (E/5785), chap. III.

preparatory work continued during 1979. A census expert was recruited and an advisory and a technical committee were formed. The advisory committee is discussing with the Government of Jordan the provision of the special tabulations needed from the recently conducted census in the country and will shortly be contacting the Governments of the Syrian Arab Republic and Kuwait for the same purpose. The technical committee has completed a list of tabulations containing the core tables of the Palestinian census.

12. The Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), being a full member of ECWA, continued to benefit from the advisory services of the Commission and to participate in all its activities.

### III. UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

13. Through the period covered by the present report, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) continued to provide assistance to the Palestinian people through ongoing regional projects. One such project supports the Institute of Education, currently located at Amman, which was jointly created by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in 1964 in order to provide in-service training for teachers and key education personnel serving the UNRWA/UNESCO school programme. The schools under this joint programme are located mainly in the West Bank, Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic. During the period 1977-1979 the UNESCO/UNRWA joint programme covered 320,000 students in 577 schools, 4 normal training schools, 7 professional training centres and the above-mentioned Institute. In 1972, the contribution of the Government of Switzerland for the activities of the Institute was replaced by UNDP contributions which totalled for the period 1977-1979 about \$2 million, with UNESCO as the executing agency. To date, UNDP assistance to this project has amounted to \$2.3 million, for the purpose of helping the Institute to carry out research on its audio-visual programme and to provide training to the teachers and educational personnel, mostly Palestinians, serving in UNESCO/UNRWA schools in the region. UNDP and UNESCO are discussing a follow-up project that will allow for the continuation of some UNDP support to the activities being carried out and at the same time provide services to a number of Arab countries which have been utilizing the facilities of the Institute at Amman and benefiting from the services of its staff.

14. Another regional project in this category is the Arab Maritime Transport Academy which offers training facilities to Palestinian students and others. UNDP has been requested to extend its support to the Academy in its new premises in the United Arab Emirates. Two other regional projects assisted by UNDP, which also provide training to Palestinian students, are the Institute of Statistics and the Arab Planning Institute.

15. In addition to the foregoing specific projects, following the adoption of General Assembly resolution 33/147 of 20 December 1978 entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people", an Interagency Task Force was established by the Administrator of UNDP to undertake an initial identification of the social and

economic needs of the Palestinian people and to work out a list of national projects for meeting their needs, in conformity with resolution 33/147, and to prepare a report, including a list of national projects, for the consideration of an interagency meeting. This Task Force was composed, in addition to representatives of UNDP, of officials of ECWA, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), UNESCO and the World Health Organization (WHO).

16. The report of the Interagency Task Force was considered at an interagency meeting held on 30 April and 1 May 1979. All agency representatives present at that meeting endorsed the report of the Task Force and expressed their appreciation of its quality and content. It was on the basis of this report, which was submitted to the Administrator, that he prepared his own report (DP/410) which was presented to the Governing Council of UNDP at its twenty-sixth session. In this report the Administrator summarized the work of the Task Force, noted the economic and social needs of the Palestinian people and, in accordance with the provision of General Assembly resolution 33/147 calling upon UNDP to provide funds for concrete projects to meet the economic and social needs of the Palestinian people, recommended 18 project proposals for approval by the Governing Council. These project proposals were selected by the Administrator according to the consultations called for in resolution 33/147 and amounted to an estimated \$3.5 million, including the contingency reserve which the Administrator proposed for financing from the UNDP Programme Reserve.

17. In its decision 79/18, 3/ the Governing Council authorized the Administrator to draw up to \$3.5 million from the Programme Reserve to finance the projects recommended for assistance to the Palestinian people; authorized the Administrator to undertake appropriate consultations in accordance with resolution 33/147, and normal UNDP procedures, with a view to the implementation of the proposed projects; and authorized the Administrator to accept funds from Governments and intergovernmental organizations for the purpose of implementing projects for assistance to the Palestinian people.

18. This decision and the report of the Governing Council (DP/410) were considered by the Economic and Social Council at its second regular session of 1979 and by the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session. In resolution 34/133, the General Assembly, inter alia, noted with satisfaction the action taken by the Administrator and the Governing Council of the UNDP in response to resolution 33/147 and endorsed decision 79/18 of the Governing Council on the implementation of resolution 33/147.

19. Since the adoption of decision 79/18 by the Governing Council of UNDP, the Administrator has personally conducted consultations called for in resolution 33/147 with a view to the implementation of the projects that had been identified. In addition to these consultations, UNDP has further elaborated all approved project proposals and modalities for their execution.

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3/ Ibid., 1979, Supplement No. 10 (E/1973/40), chap. XXI, sect. D.

IV. UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE  
REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST

20. Since May 1950, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has been providing education, health and relief services according to eligibility for Palestine refugees and their descendants registered for assistance, who numbered 1,821,933 as of 31 December 1979. 4/

21. Although there has been no census of Palestinians, the registered refugees are more than half of the total Palestinian population living in Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, Jordan and the occupied territories of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, which constitute the Agency's area of operations. Consequently UNRWA is a major provider of education, medical services, food and welfare to the Palestinian people. These services have evolved over the years in direct response to the needs of the refugees and the Agency's financial ability to meet them. By the end of 1979, more than \$1.6 billion had been expended by UNRWA on assistance to Palestine refugees. The education services were operated in co-operation with UNESCO and the health services in co-operation with WHO.

22. The regular programmes are fully described in the annual reports of the Commissioner-General of UNRWA. (For an account of the programme in 1979, see the annual report for the period 1 July 1978-30 June 1979.) 5/ In brief, over 311,000 children received elementary and preparatory (lower secondary) education in 623 UNRWA schools; 8,667 pupils were assisted with their secondary education at local government or private schools; more than 4,600 trainees followed vocational or teacher training courses at eight UNRWA centres; 351 students were awarded scholarships for university study; modest programmes of pre-school, youth and women's activities and adult craft-training were conducted; and professional in-service training was provided for medical and educational personnel. Medical services were available to 1.5 million refugees, and supplementary feeding was provided for such vulnerable groups as young children and expectant and nursing mothers. In the camps, the Agency provided environmental sanitation and assistance with housing repairs for families in special need. Monthly basic rations of flour, rice, sugar and oil were distributed to about 830,000 refugees, and special hardship assistance was given to families in particular need. The total cost of the services in 1979 was approximately \$158.9 million. The programmes were carried out by some 16,600 employees, mostly teachers, all but a handful of whom are themselves Palestine refugees, under the direction of 113 international staff members. 6/

4/ Palestine refugees (by UNRWA definition for operational purposes) are persons whose normal residence was Palestine for a minimum of two years preceding the Arab-Israeli conflict in 1948 and who, as a result of this conflict, lost both their homes and their means of livelihood. To be eligible for UNRWA assistance, refugees (and their direct descendants), must be (a) registered with UNRWA, (b) living in the area of UNRWA operations and (c) in need.

5/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/34/13 and Corr.1).

6/ Of the international staff members, 20 are loaned by UNESCO to provide technical guidance to the education programme and 5 by WHO to provide technical guidance to the health programme.

23. The prime determinant of the ability of UNRWA to meet the needs of the refugees is the level of its financial resources. Given the funds, there are many projects which the Agency would be keen to implement. They include, for instance, expansion of the vocational training programme to equip a larger number of adolescents with the skills in growing demand in the Middle East. There is an urgent need to furnish the elementary and preparatory schools with adequate library facilities. At present, the annual average expenditure per pupil on books is a mere 15 cents, compared with the minimum world-wide standard of \$5 recommended by UNESCO. Refugees with special handicaps due to physical or mental disability or chronic illness have legitimate claims for additional assistance which UNRWA well recognizes but is impotent to meet. These are simply a few selections from a much longer listing. As the Agency has pointed out repeatedly over the years, income is insufficient to maintain even the minimum services at the established levels. In 1979 the Agency's financial difficulties were particularly acute. Despite the non-implementation of some \$26.3 million of its budget, the Agency nevertheless suffered a deficit of approximately \$12.6 million, because income received totalled only \$146.3 million against expenditures of \$158.9 million.

24. Nevertheless, within those constraints, a limited number of improvements, of a nature to enhance the efficiency with which services met refugees' needs or to enrich an existing programme, were possible.

25. In 1979, expenditure on the education programme, which accounted for more than half of the total UNRWA budget, increased by 8.7 per cent over 1978, from \$76.7 million to \$83.4 million. The major item of additional outlay was on the school education programme, which expands each year to respond to the growing school-age population. In 1978/79, the new intake included over 4,000 pupils more than in 1977/78; 241 additional teachers were appointed. Most UNRWA school buildings are already operated on a double-shift basis to cope with the numbers of pupils. Some of the buildings urgently require replacement. During the year, \$2.2 million was allocated to building 185 additional classrooms and specialist units, and an additional \$0.4 million was committed to improving facilities within the schools.

26. Health services accounted for \$25.9 million of total expenditure, or 16.3 per cent, an increase of 15.1 per cent over 1978. The quality of the medical services provided at the health centres is under continuous review. Specialized clinics are operated for the treatment of tuberculosis, diabetes, cardiovascular disorders, dermatological and rheumatic complaints and eye diseases; small clinical laboratories attached to health units were equipped to perform biochemical tests previously referred to central laboratories. Special attention was focused on the level of nutrition among infants and young children and their mothers. In response to the high prevalence of diarrhoeal diseases among small children, particularly in summer time, the Agency has, since March 1979, participated in the Gaza Strip in the development of a WHO-assisted project for the implementation of early oral rehydration therapy. Seminars were held for the proper training of UNRWA health personnel involved in this project. In camp sanitation, the Agency participated with an allocation of \$50,000 (in addition to some \$210,000 from incompleting earlier projects) in self-help projects by the refugees to construct drains and pathways in camps throughout the area of operations, to connect sewage systems to

local networks, and to continue the provision of private water connexions and latrines to those families still without them. The schemes were undertaken with the co-operation of the local municipal and governmental authorities and, in Lebanon, with the Palestine Liberation Organization.

27. The third category of service, the relief programme, involved expenditures in 1979 of \$34.6 million, compared with \$28.8 million in 1978, and accounted for 20.1 per cent of the total budget. It comprises essentially the basic ration, with very limited shelter and welfare assistance. In 1979, shortage of cash and insufficient contributions of flour necessitated a reduction in the flour component of the ration. In addition, there were shortages of other commodities due to delays in receipt of contributions in kind. The Agency continued issuing extra rations for special hardship cases in Jordan, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Initially this assistance amounts to the difference between the quantity of flour issued to each ration recipient and 10 kg per month. By the end of 1979, some 28,000 persons were benefiting from the extra rations.

28. Again in 1979, the Agency's operations in Lebanon suffered extensively from local disturbances, especially those consequent to Israeli military operations against targets in southern Lebanon, which caused the repeated dislocation of some 50,000 refugees and damage to refugee shelters as well as some Agency installations. In total, some \$1.3 million in extra costs arose primarily for special feeding operations and repairs.

#### V. UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES

29. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is concerned with the situation of Palestinian refugees and seeks to assist them wherever this is possible, according to its terms of reference.

30. As regards Palestinian refugees who find themselves within the area of UNRWA operations in the Middle East, UNHCR has not provided any assistance since, according to paragraph 7 (c) of the statute of the Office of the High Commissioner, his competence does not extend to persons receiving protection or assistance from another United Nations organ.

31. The Office of the High Commissioner, however, assists Palestinian refugees who are outside the area of UNRWA operations in the Middle East and who fulfil the general criteria of refugee status under the statute of UNHCR.

32. Needless to say, and bearing in mind the above, the Office of UNHCR will continue to do its utmost to extend help to Palestinian refugees.

#### VI. UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND

33. In addition to previous assistance reported by the Secretary-General (E/1979/61), during the course of 1979, UNICEF allocated \$100,000 from the Executive Director's Emergency Reserve for assistance described below for displaced Palestinian children and mothers within the context of the relief and rehabilitation programme in Lebanon assisted by UNICEF.

34. Assistance in the amount of \$100,000 was extended by UNICEF for various health and child-care programmes implemented by the Palestine Red Crescent Society and the General Union of Palestinian Women. It included provision of supplies and equipment, vaccines and transport for maternal and child health centres; training grants for the centres' personnel; equipment for a children's hospital; equipment, reference publications and teaching aids for nursing and midwifery schools; supplies and equipment for a sanitation and public health programme and the concerned departments of the Palestine Red Crescent Society; and supplies and equipment for kindergartens and nurseries.

#### VII. WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME

35. Up to the end of 1978, the World Food Programme (WFP) provided about \$3.5 million in emergency assistance to Palestinian refugees in Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic through the host countries. The Programme also participated in the deliberations of the Interagency Task Force established in response to General Assembly resolution 33/147 on assistance to the Palestinian people, and instructed its field officers in the Near East to seek opportunities to co-operate with the Task Force and offer their experience and knowledge. The Interagency Task Force has since submitted its recommendations to UNDP with a list of project ideas for the benefit of Palestinian people. The Governing Council of UNDP, at its twenty-sixth session held in June 1979, has approved 18 national projects from the list, with expenditure of up to \$3.5 million. 7/

36. No direct assistance was provided by WFP to the Palestinian people in 1979, because no request was received during that year and, under its regulations, WFP responds only to specific requests from Governments. However, the contents of General Assembly resolution 34/133 have been noted for guidance.

37. Following a decision taken by the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes at its first session, the Palestine Liberation Organization is invited to attend the sessions of the Committee in its capacity as observer.

#### VIII. UNITED NATIONS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

38. Pursuant to the adoption of Economic and Social Council resolutions 2026 (LXI) and 2100 (LXIII), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) secretariat contacted the representatives of PLO to the international organizations at Vienna and received, through his office, on 9 September 1977, technical assistance requests for the Palestinian people. These technical assistance requests, which were contained in the note by the Executive Director on Technical Assistance to the Palestinian People (ID/B/C.3/66), were recommended by the Permanent Committee at its tenth session and approved by the Industrial Development Board at its twelfth session.

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7/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1979, Supplement No. 10 (E/1979/40), chap. XXI, sect. D, decision 79/18.



39. Pursuant to the adoption of General Assembly resolution 33/147, the Administrator of UNDP recalled that, at the January 1979 meeting of the Governing Council, he had announced his intention to convene, in co-ordination with ECWA, a meeting on this matter in February 1979. On 15 and 16 February 1979, an interagency meeting was convened at Geneva and an Interagency Task Force was established, composed of the representatives of UNDP, ECWA, UNIDO, ILO, FAO UNESCO and WHO. 8/

40. According to its terms of reference, the Interagency Task Force was to undertake an initial identification of the social and economic needs of the Palestinian people and to work out a list of notional projects for meeting their needs in conformity with the General Assembly resolution 33/147, and to prepare a report, including a list of notional projects, for the consideration of the interagency meeting. The interagency meeting also felt that the Task Force should co-ordinate with ECWA and consult and co-operate with PLO, the authorities in the Arab host countries and visit the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

41. The mission of the Task Force members took place between 3 March and 11 April 1979.

42. The representative of UNIDO reported that the Task Force undertook extensive consultations and maintained close co-ordination with ECWA throughout its work. It also held discussions with PLO and representatives of Palestinian organizations and institutions. It had useful consultations with government authorities of the three Arab host countries, that is, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic.

43. In its report, the Task Force regretted that it had not been possible to visit the West Bank and Gaza Strip. It expressed the hope that, in the process of following up on its recommendations, representatives of the Administrator of UNDP and of the United Nations system would be able to visit those territories.

44. The report of the Interagency Task Force was submitted to the interagency meeting which was held at Geneva on 30 April and 1 May 1979. All agency representatives present at this meeting endorsed the report of the Task Force. On the basis of the final report of the interagency meeting, the Administrator of UNDP prepared a report (DP/410), for the consideration of the Governing Council at its twenty-sixth session.

45. Among the project proposals recommended by the Administrator for financing, there is only one project in the industrial field, entitled "Training in industrial development", with an amount of \$175,000. No financing from the Programme Reserve of UNDP is provided for the other notional projects related to industrial development, which the Interagency Task Force had listed in its report and which had been approved by the interagency meeting, namely the following projects:

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8/ Ibid., chap. V, para. 111.

(a) Survey of manufacturing industry in the West Bank and Gaza (\$180,000) (this project was recommended by the Permanent Committee at its tenth session and approved by the Industrial Development Board at its twelfth session);

(b) Feasibility study for a cement plant in the West Bank (\$18,000);

(c) Feasibility study for a canning plant for citrus fruits (\$18,000);

(d) Assistance to the plastics industry (\$18,000);

(e) Assistance to the pharmaceutical industry (\$18,000);

(f) Assistance to small-scale industries and workshops (\$72,000).

46. Brief explanations on each project prepared by the Interagency Task Force are given in paragraph 51 below.

47. However, as stated in the report of the Administrator of UNDP (DP/410, para. 16), the Administrator also expressed the hope that specialized agencies and organizations of the United Nations system in a position to do so, would consider financing, through their own regular programmes or any available trust funds, other selected projects or parts of projects which could assist in helping to improve the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people.

48. The project approved by the UNDP Governing Council entitled "Training in industrial development" emanates from the original request of the representative of PLO to the international organizations at Vienna, which was recommended by the Permanent Committee at its tenth session and approved by the Industrial Development Board at its twelfth session. It covers the following:

(a) Six fellowships for six months each in various fields of industrial development;

(b) Twenty participants in in-plant training courses and technical meetings.

49. UNIDO has already requested UNDP headquarters to get financial authorization to implement this project. The project document is being prepared by the Training Section in close co-operation with the representative of PLO to the international organizations at Vienna.

50. Offers for fellowships in different fields of industrial development and in-plant group training programmes were also made by UNIDO to the office of the representative of PLO to the international organizations at Vienna. One nomination was received and accepted for the In-Plant Group Training Programme in the Field of Repair and Maintenance of Biomedical Electronic Equipment which was held in Hungary from 7 January to 14 March 1980. Nominations are awaited for other in-plant group training programmes.

51. The following projects in the industrial sector have been prepared by the Interagency Task Force:

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Project 25

Survey of manufacturing industry in the West Bank and Gaza

Survey of manufacturing industry since 1967 in the West Bank and Gaza including basic background information on the development since 1967, analysis of recent developments, policies and policy measures affecting manufacturing, potential for the development of manufacturing, identification and evaluation of manufacturing projects, findings and recommendations.

<u>Field</u>	<u>Man/months</u>	
1 industrial economist (macro level)	6	
1 industrial engineer (productivity)	6	
1 project evaluation (micro level)	6	
1 small-scale industries and handicrafts	6	
Industrial policies	<u>6</u>	
Man/months	30	<u>Total \$180,000</u>

Project 26

Training in industrial development

- (a) Six fellowships for six months each in various fields of industrial development;
- (b) Participation in in-plant training courses and technical meetings.

For the participation in the in-plant training courses, an estimated number of 20 participants is given.

Estimated cost for six fellowships: 36 m/m

and for 20 participants in in-plant training courses calculated for average duration of three months per training course:

Total \$178,000

Project 27

Feasibility study for a cement plant in the West Bank

which is planned with an estimated total cost of \$45 million.

One expert - 3 man/months

Total \$ 18,000

Project 28

Feasibility study on canning plant for citrus fruits

In Gaza, where citrus production is the main source of livelihood, the canning of citrus products would be very useful. In 1976, on 8,000 ha, 280,000 tons of citrus were produced of which 250,000 tons were exported and the remaining 30,000 used for local consumption. A canning plant would facilitate the proper preservation of citrus fruits and consequently facilitate the marketing.

One expert - 3 man/months

Total \$18,000

Project 29

Assistance to the plastics industry

The plastics industry in the West Bank could benefit from technical advice concerning production.

One engineer specialized in plastic - 3 man/months

Total \$18,000

Project 30

Assistance to the pharmaceutical industry

Various establishments of the pharmaceutical industry are existing in the West Bank. Technical advice concerning production and marketing would be useful.

One expert on production: 2 months

One expert on marketing: 1 month

Total \$18,000

Project 32

Assistance to small-scale industries and workshops

In the Palestinian communities in Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic, 33 workshops exist for the production of clothes, wooden and metal furniture, leather products and shoes, toys and folklore needlework.

Assistance in management and production, including quality control and marketing promotion, is required. Special importance should be given to the preservation of the cultural heritage of Palestinian handicrafts. The projects could be eventually organized on a regional basis including Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, Jordan as well as the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The following experts are required:

One expert in small-scale industries and handicrafts:

6 months

One expert in export promotion

6 months

Total \$72,000

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#### IX. UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

52. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is not an operational organization and has very modest technical assistance activities, essentially in the form of short term advisory missions. However, the UNEP Regional Office for West Asia at Beirut is currently discussing with the Palestine Liberation Organization possible assistance by UNEP to the Palestinian people in 1980.

#### X. INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION

53. During 1979 the International Labour Organisation (ILO) granted fellowships to two candidates, chosen in consultation with the PLO, for participation in a course on management of vocational training institutions and a course on training methodology at the ILO International Centre for Advanced Technical and Vocational Training in Turin. Both fellowships were financed by technical co-operation funds from the regular budget of ILO.

54. The Organisation took part in the interagency meeting convened by the UNDP Administrator in Geneva on 15 February 1979, the aim of which was to devise methods for determining the specific economic and social needs of the Palestinian people. The Task Force organized as a result of this interagency meeting had consultations from 2 March to 10 April 1979 with government authorities in Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic and with PLO representatives. A report was drawn up that included five project proposals on questions falling within the competence of ILO, namely: co-operative development, social security, assistance to workers' organizations and vocational training for industry. The execution of these projects is dependent on UNDP approval and financing.

55. The ILO programme for the biennium 1980-1981 provides for granting fellowships to candidates chosen in consultation with the PLO.

56. As a follow-up to a first visit in April 1978, a mission appointed by the Director-General of the International Labour Office and headed by an Assistant-Director-General, accompanied by two staff members of ILO, visited Israel and the occupied Arab territories in Palestine, the Golan Heights and the Sinai from 25 February to 10 March 1979. The mission spent time in Israel and in the occupied Arab territories, holding a series of meetings and travelling about to study the situation of Arab workers in the occupied territories, whether employed in the territories themselves or in Israel. It had lengthy meetings with municipal representatives, union leaders, other prominent persons, workers in the occupied territories, and other representatives of civilian and military authorities and of Israeli employers' and workers' organizations.

57. As had been the case during the preceding visit, the mission paid special attention to all matters involving equality of opportunity and treatment for Arab workers in the occupied territories in the matter of employment, working conditions, social benefits and union activities. It made a number of recommendations on these questions, the results of which will be reviewed in 1980. The report of the mission was published as an annex to the report of the Director-General to the International Labour Conference at its 65th session in 1979.

## XI. FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

58. In pursuance of Economic and Social Council resolution 2100 (LXIII) and other relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Council, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has continued to assist the Palestinian people through the Palestine Liberation Organization and, more particularly, the Palestine National Fund. This assistance has included the projects discussed below.

59. During the first half of 1979, FAO participated in the two interagency meetings organized by UNDP at Geneva on 15 and 16 February and on 30 April and 1 May, in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 33/147. It also participated, through the assignment of a senior consultant, in the work of the mission which the interagency task force assembled by UNDP carried out from 2 March to 10 April 1979, to study the economic and social needs of the Palestinian people. This mission led to the identification and preliminary formulation of a number of technical assistance projects, several of which fall within the field of competence of FAO. Following the endorsement of the report of that mission by the UNDP Governing Council, at its twenty-sixth session, in June 1979, it is expected that at least four projects in the broad field of food and agriculture may be entrusted for execution to FAO, for a total of about \$456,000.

60. Out of the two technical co-operation projects approved at the end of 1978, one, covering the compilation and tabulation of agricultural data, for an amount of \$10,000, has been completed; the other, providing for five 12-month fellowships for specialized training in agricultural development, for an amount of \$61,000, is underway. Furthermore, a third project, intended to provide assistance in agricultural planning, was approved at the end of 1979.

61. Finally, the Palestine Liberation Organization, in its capacity as representative of the Palestinian people, was invited to attend the twentieth session of the FAO Conference, in November 1979, as well as a seminar on Rainfed Agriculture (May 1979), the sixth session of the Regional Commission on Land and Water Utilization in the Near East (May 1979), a Training Course on Home Economics Extension and Family Life Education (July 1979), the eighth session of the Near East Commission on Agricultural Statistics (September 1979), and the tenth session of the Commission for Controlling the Desert Locust in the Near East (December 1979).

## XII. UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

62. The assistance provided to the Palestinian people by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) that was described in the previous report of the Secretary-General (E/1979/61/Add.1) is continuing and expanding. The following additional information is relevant.

63. After the first interagency meeting in Geneva on 15 and 16 February 1979, under UNDP auspices, UNESCO took part in the second interagency meeting, held from 30 April to 1 May 1979.

64. The UNDP Governing Council in decision 79/18 9/ authorized the UNDP Administrator to draw up to \$3.5 million to finance projects to be recommended by him. Through its continuing contacts with UNDP, UNESCO expressed its desire to be associated closely with this co-operation by the United Nations system, particularly in reviewing operational projects within its field of competence.

65. It should be pointed out that consultations with UNDP and the authorities concerned are still under way. No project has as yet reached the operational stage.

66. In response to a resolution adopted by the Conference of Arab Ministers of Education at Abu Dhabi from 7 to 14 November 1977 concerning the conclusion of a UNESCO Funds-in-Trust agreement to finance scholarships for Palestinian students, the Director-General informed the member States that the secretariat was prepared to provide the necessary assistance for its implementation. To that end the UNESCO secretariat consulted officials of Beirut University and Al Najah University (two Palestinian institutions) and reviewed with them the prospects for co-operation in that field.

Educational and cultural institutions  
in the occupied Arab territories

67. At its 108th session, from 19 September to 19 October 1979, the UNESCO Executive Board reviewed the implementation of resolutions 18 C/13.1, 19 C/15.1 and 20 C/14.1 concerning educational and cultural institutions in the occupied Arab territories.

68. It accordingly took note of the UNESCO mission to the occupied Arab territories to supervise the operation of educational and cultural institutions in those territories. It also noted that the Israeli authorities had prevented UNESCO from sending a mission to Jerusalem.

69. In its decision 108 EX/5.1.3, the Executive Board invited the Director-General to pursue his efforts to implement the resolutions and decisions concerning educational and cultural institutions in the occupied Arab territories and to arrange for full supervision by UNESCO of the educational and cultural institutions in all the occupied Arab territories, including Jerusalem.

70. It decided to include this item in the agenda of the twenty-first session of the General Conference with a view to taking the necessary measures in that connexion.

Palestinian Open University

71. UNESCO is continuing its feasibility study of the "Palestinian Open University" project undertaken in co-operation with the Arab Fund for Economic and

9/ Ibid., chap. XXI, decision 79/18.

Social Development and the PLO. The PLO leaders have shown a keen interest in the implementation of the project. Negotiations to that end are under way.

72. A symposium on the curricula of the Open University was held in Lebanon from 28 to 30 January 1980, with the participation of a number of educators and specialists from various Arab States.

International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People

73. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 32/40 B, the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People was observed at UNESCO headquarters on 29 November 1979. The group of representatives of Arab States to UNESCO organized the ceremony, in which representatives of other regional groups and a representative of the Director-General participated. The ceremony was followed by the inauguration at UNESCO House of an exhibition of children's drawings organized by the PLO.

Assistance provided by UNESCO under its regular budget to the  
Palestine Liberation Organization

74. The assistance provided by UNESCO in this connexion during the current biennium (1979-1980) is made up as follows:

(a) A financial contribution of \$52,100 was approved to enable 11 Palestinian students to pursue their university studies. The requests had been submitted under the 1979-1980 participation programme;

(b) Under the regular programme the following assistance has been granted:

	<u>Dollars</u>
Nine-month fellowship in journalism	3,350.00
Nine-month fellowship in town planning	3,350.00
Nine-month fellowship in anthropology	3,350.00
Nine-month fellowship in political science	2,250.00
Equipment	1,700.00
Assistance to the Palestinian Open University	15,000.00
	<u>29,000.00</u>

Institute of Education (RAB/74/006)

75. UNESCO has been the executing agency for this UNDP-financed project since 1972. UNRWA participates in the project as a subcontractor. Phase III of the project is under way and has been extended until June 1980.



XIII. WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

76. The World Health Organization (WHO) is continuing to provide assistance to the Palestinian population in a number of different ways.

77. During 1979, visits to the territories concerned were carried out by WHO staff competent in the fields of cardiovascular diseases and mental health to study the possibilities of implementing projects in these particular programme areas. In follow-up to the recommendations put forward as a result of these visits, some action has already been taken.

78. In the field of cardiovascular diseases, WHO financed the procurement of electronic monitoring equipment for a four-bed coronary care unit. The organization is also considering the possibility of contributing to the enlargement of the project on prevention and control of rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart disease, and also to the development of a programme in comprehensive control of cardiovascular diseases including hypertension, ischaemic heart disease, congenital malformations and eventually other non-communicable diseases (diabetes, chronic rheumatoid arthritis).

79. A study was carried out on the nature and extent of mental health problems and existing mental health services, as a result of which WHO has indicated its readiness to provide assistance in the form of fellowship training, the provision of supplies and equipment, and consultant services to review the progress made in these developments. The views of the authorities concerned in this respect have been requested in order to enable some action to be taken to implement these recommendations.

80. A visit was also carried out by a public health administrator/epidemiologist with a view to expanding the previously implemented immunization programme and studying the needs regarding improved general maternal and child health care.

81. Additional funds have since been provided for the continuation of the poliomyelitis immunization programme which had been set up in 1978, and a grant was also provided for vaccine and supplies for Mantoux testing and BCG vaccinations. A vaccination project for measles was also implemented during the past year assisted by WHO in the form of funds for an information campaign and the supply of 140,000 doses of measles vaccine.

82. The organization has continued its intimate collaboration with, and support of, the various health programmes of UNRWA. In particular, within the framework of the organization's Diarrhoeal Diseases Control Programme, a visit was carried out in order to develop a project for application of oral rehydration therapy at both the maternal and child health centres and health clinics in a uniform manner. In this respect, seminars were held for local UNRWA personnel, detailed guide-lines were drawn up and a protocol was prepared for evaluation of the project. Organization is planned of other seminars on diarrhoeal diseases, rehydration, and breast-feeding for physicians and nursing staff with WHO providing short-term consultants and teaching material. To assist further the implementation of this project, WHO is also providing supplies of oral rehydration salts.

83. In the sphere of training, WHO is continuing its fellowship programme to provide specialized training for Palestinian para-medical staff.

84. Close collaboration has been maintained with PLO and assistance has been provided to the Palestine Red Crescent Society with the payment of salary differentials to physicians and technicians.

85. In addition to these individual activities, WHO also participated in the Interagency Task Force, established in response to General Assembly resolution 33/147, to define modalities of identification on specific economic and social needs of the Palestinian people. The Organization is prepared to support certain project proposals contained in the report of the survey carried out by the Task Force.

#### XIV. WORLD BANK

86. The articles of agreement of the World Bank require that loans be made to, or guaranteed by, member Governments. Since World Bank lending has been directed increasingly to the needs of the poorest population groups within each member country, improvement in the economic well-being of the Palestinian people residing in member countries is a matter of obvious concern to the Bank. In this regard, however, it should be pointed out that because Bank Group projects entail substantial financial commitments on the part of the borrowing Government, it is clear that decisions concerning the benefits to particular population groups, as compared to other benefits from Bank Group financing, should be made by the Governments concerned in the first instance.

87. Some of the projects which the Bank has been requested to finance in member countries where the Palestinian people reside have benefited Palestinians, although the extent of such benefits would be difficult to quantify. In some of these countries, projects already financed by the Bank Group and projects currently under preparation aim at improving living conditions in urban areas, including some areas in which Palestinian people are concentrated. As indicated previously, the Bank Group stands ready, in consultation with and at the request of member Governments concerned, to assist in the preparation and financing of development projects which meet the usual Bank Group criteria, and which would particularly benefit the Palestinian people in their countries.

#### XV. INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND

88. Economic and Social Council resolution 2100 (LXIII) has been brought to the attention of the Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund.

#### XVI. INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION

89. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is willing to co-operate, within its mandate, with ECWA and UNDP on the implementation of Economic and Social Council resolutions 2026 (LXI) and 2100 (LXIII). In accordance with a decision taken by the Assembly of ICAO, the Palestine Liberation Organization is entitled to participate as an observer in the sessions and the work of the ICAO Assembly and other international conferences convened under the auspices of ICAO and in the regional meetings dealing with matters related to its territories. In this connexion, PLO has been invited to the forthcoming twenty-third session of the Assembly of ICAO, which will be held in September and October 1980.

#### XVII. UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION

90. At its February 1979 session the Executive Council of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) decided to grant two scholarships, to be financed by the UPU Special Fund for the 1979 financial year, by way of assistance to the Palestinian people. In pursuance of that decision, the International Bureau of UPU made arrangements to enroll the two recipients at the Institut supérieur postal arabe (ISPA) (Arab Postal College) at Damascus as from the first academic year, 1979/80. Since ISPA provides a four-year training programme, the International Bureau of UPU will in due course make arrangements to finance the two scholarships until the end of the four-year period of study.

91. The Union is willing to implement the project mentioned in document E/1979/61, concerning the training of five Palestinians for four years, once a source of funding has been found. The purpose of the project is to provide postal training to Palestinians that will prepare them to serve as professional postal administrators.

92. The Union took part in the interagency meetings organized by UNDP on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 33/147, with a view to identifying the social and economic needs of the Palestinian people.

#### XVIII. INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION

93. The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) has continued its effort to assist the Palestinian people in the field of telecommunications. The activities reported during previous years have been pursued and contacts maintained through the representative of PLO at Geneva and, in the field, through the regional organizations.

94. During 1979, ITU convened a World Administrative Radio Conference concerned with the general revision of the radio regulations. The Palestine Liberation Organization was invited to participate as an observer at this conference and the interests of the Palestinian people were also assured by the presence of regional telecommunications organizations, such as the Arab Telecommunications Union, of which PLO is a full member.

95. Within the framework of the project entitled Middle East and Mediterranean telecommunication network, ITU is preparing two seminars during 1980, one on traffic engineering to be held in Turkey from 5 to 17 May, and the other on tariffs to be held in November. The Union is planning to invite Palestinian engineers working in other administrations in the area to attend these seminars. The invitation will be made through the PLO representative at Geneva and two fellowships will be provided to cover the attendance of Palestinians.

#### XIX. INTER-GOVERNMENTAL MARITIME CONSULTATIVE ORGANIZATION

96. In the course of last year the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO) initiated consultations with UNRWA in an effort to explore the possibilities of jointly approaching appropriate bodies for assistance for the training of Palestinian refugees. A meeting of senior officials of the two organizations has been arranged and it is expected that they will submit proposals which could then be considered by both IMCO and UNRWA.

97. The IMCO Council, at its forty-first session, in October 1978, decided that the liberation movements recognized, inter alia, by the League of Arab States, should be invited as observers to IMCO meetings and conferences, and requested the Secretary-General to report on this decision to the Assembly, at its eleventh regular session, in November 1979. The Assembly was invited to amend its relevant rules of procedure in order to implement this decision. Accordingly, at the invitation of the Secretary-General, the Palestine Liberation Organization was represented by observers at the eleventh session of the IMCO Assembly, from 5 to 16 November 1979. At its fourth meeting, on 6 November 1979, the Assembly adopted the necessary amendments to its rules of procedure thus implementing the Council's decision in relation to sessions of the Assembly. Likewise, the Maritime Safety Committee and the Marine Environment Protection Committee have also amended their rules of procedure in order to implement the Council's decision.

98. By enabling contacts between representatives of PLO and IMCO to proceed regularly and on an institutional basis, it is hoped that the above developments will open fresh opportunities for determining new ways and means of providing assistance to the Palestine people in the maritime field. Within IMCO's field of competence the Organization will seize every opportunity to make a suitable contribution in response to General Assembly resolution 34/133. In this respect, the governing organs of IMCO will be kept informed of the relevant decisions adopted by the United Nations.

#### XX. WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION

99. The Director-General of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) has drawn the attention of the governing bodies of WIPO, at their sessions of September and October 1979, to General Assembly resolutions 33/28 C, 33/112 C and 33/147 concerning assistance to the Palestinian people.

100. The Director-General of WIPO was represented at the Interagency Meeting at Geneva held on 15 and 16 February 1979 and which was reconvened on 30 April and

1 May 1979, on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 33/147, concerning the identification of specific economic and social needs of the Palestinian people.

101. Following discussions between the International Bureau and the Permanent Observer for PLO, a fellowship was awarded in the field of copyright under the 1979 WIPO Training Programme, to an official of the Palestinian Research Centre located at Beirut.

102. As regards the WIPO Fellowships Programme for 1980, an invitation to present candidates for training in the fields of copyright and industrial property was sent to the permanent observer for PLO at Geneva.

103. The Director-General of WIPO was represented at the meeting held at Geneva on 29 November 1979, to commemorate the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

104. The International Bureau of WIPO has informed the Permanent Observer for the Palestine Liberation Organization that it remains at his disposal for further discussions concerning the establishment and implementation of concrete projects to ensure the improvement of the social and economic conditions of the Palestinian people, and that it looks forward to continued co-operation with PLO.

105. The International Bureau of WIPO has kept the secretariat of the United Nations Economic Commission for Western Asia informed of its activities for the benefit of the Palestinian people and has welcomed any suggestion concerning co-ordination of efforts, as mentioned in paragraph 1 of Council resolution 2100 (LXIII).

#### XXI. INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

106. Regarding assistance to Palestinian people, the representative of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) attended two interagency meetings held at Geneva on 15 and 16 February 1979 and on 30 April and 1 May 1979, convened in response to General Assembly resolution 33/147. The mandate of IFAD under its agreement is confined to financing agricultural development in its developing member States. Consequently, IFAD observed discussions in these meetings with due interest and concern.

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REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Assistance to the Palestinian people

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

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\* A/35/150.

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The replies attached hereto contain information received from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the World Meteorological Organization on action taken by them in implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 2100 (LXIII) of 3 August 1977 and General Assembly resolution 34/133 of 14 December 1979.

## II. WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION

2. On the subject of assistance to the Palestinian people, the Executive Committee of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) requested the Secretary-General to take the following action:

(a) To contact the Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA) with a view to identifying the social and economic needs of the Palestinian people in the fields of competence of WMO;

(b) To consult the Palestine Liberation Organization as to the form and nature of assistance which might be required in the fields of competence of WMO and to formulate appropriate projects thereafter.

3. Both ECWA and the Palestine Liberation Organization have been contacted by WMO official communications.

4. The organization also took part in the interagency meeting on assistance to the Palestinian people, organized by the United Nations Development Programme and held at Geneva in April-May 1979.

5. In response to General Assembly resolution 32/90, of 13 December 1977, in which the Assembly invited United Nations agencies to consider the inclusion, within their respective spheres of competence, of assistance for higher education for Palestinian refugee students, the Eighth Congress of WMO, held in 1979, decided that WMO funds for fellowships for refugees, which had previously been reserved for refugees from colonial countries in Africa, should be extended to cover Palestinian refugees.

## III. UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

6. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in its resolution 109 (V) of 1 June 1979, "considering that the peoples of Namibia, Palestine, South Africa and Zimbabwe are still living under colonial domination or foreign occupation", requested the Secretary-General of UNCTAD "within the context of the International Development Strategy for the third United Nations development decade, to initiate studies, within the competence of UNCTAD, as regards those peoples and countries". A study on assistance to the Palestine people is being prepared by UNCTAD pursuant to that resolution with the assistance of a consultant. This study, as well as similar studies to be prepared on Namibia and on South Africa, will take into account the recommendations of the General Assembly and of the Economic and Social Council in this regard.

7. Following its discussion of this question at its twentieth session in March 1980, the Trade and Development Board adopted resolution 215 (X), in which it recommended that the special problems of the peoples and countries under colonial domination or foreign occupation should be explicitly recognized and integrated in the formulation of the new international development strategy for the third United Nations development decade, and that the United Nations system, including UNDP should, during the third United Nations development decade, mobilize adequate resources for providing assistance to national liberation movements recognized by regional intergovernmental organizations and to the peoples under colonial domination and foreign occupation. Work on the study concerning Palestine is expected to be completed early in 1981. In the meantime, in accordance with Conference resolution 109 (V), the Secretary-General of UNCTAD will submit a progress report to the Trade and Development Board at its twenty-first session scheduled to be held in September 1980.

8. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 3237 (XXIX) the Palestine Liberation Organization has been invited to various meetings of UNCTAD and will continue to receive similar invitations in the future.





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REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Assistance to the Palestinian people

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## INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 2026 (LXI) of 4 August 1976, the Economic and Social Council invited the United Nations Development Programme, the specialized agencies and other organizations within the United Nations system to intensify their efforts in identifying the social and economic needs of the Palestinian people. It also requested the agencies and organizations to consult and co-operate with the Palestine Liberation Organization with a view to establishing and implementing concrete projects to ensure the improvement of the social and economic conditions of the Palestinian people.
2. The Council, in its resolution 2100 (LXIII) of 3 August 1977, reiterated its earlier resolution and requested the Secretary-General to submit annual reports to the Council on the matter.
3. The General Assembly, in its resolution 35/111 of 5 December 1980, urged the relevant agencies, organizations, organs and programmes of the United Nations system to take the necessary steps for the full implementation of Economic and Social Council resolutions 2026 (LXI) and 2100 (LXIII) and requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its thirty-sixth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution.
4. The present report contains information received from organizations on action taken by them in implementation of the above resolutions. Information received from other organizations at a later date will be issued as an addendum.

II. INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM ORGANS AND ORGANIZATIONS OF  
THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

A. Economic Commission for Western Asia

[Original: English]

5. The Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA) adopted, at its seventh session, resolution 85 (VII), of 23 April 1980, in which it requested the Executive Secretary "to pursue the necessary measures for the completion of the project on the census of the Palestinian Arab people". Subsequently ECWA came to an understanding with those Arab countries undertaking censuses during 1981 that they would provide the required information in accordance with the schedules developed by the Commission. Field work has so far been completed by Jordan, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates; the Syrian Arab Republic will undertake its census during the latter part of 1981.

6. The Commission also adopted resolution 86 (VII), of 23 April 1980, in which it requested the Executive Secretary to continue his efforts to secure the remaining necessary funds so that the study on "The economic and social situation and potential of the Palestinian Arab people" could be pursued and completed as designed. In this connexion, the Executive Secretary made the necessary arrangements to allot \$US 100,000 from the ECWA Financial Contribution Account in addition to \$50,000 available under the ECWA regular budget. Furthermore, the project has been subcontracted to a consultancy firm (TEAM International) and action has been initiated.

7. Regarding assistance to Palestinian women, the secretariat prepared two studies: one on the social and economic conditions of Palestinian women inside and outside the occupied territories (A/CONF.94/21) and another on special measures of assistance to Palestinian women (A/CONF.94/4). These studies, which were adopted by the Regional Preparatory Meeting held in Damascus from 10 to 13 December 1979, were submitted to the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women, which was held at Copenhagen from 13 to 30 July 1980. An agenda item of the Conference concerned the Palestinian woman. The delegation of ECWA to the Conference co-operated with the secretariat and with delegates of member countries of the Commission in organizing a press conference on the problems of Palestinian women inside and outside the occupied territories. In addition, technical assistance was provided to the General Union of Palestinian Women.

B. United Nations Development Programme

[Original: English]

8. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has continued to finance regional activities which have benefited the Palestinian people either directly or indirectly. For instance, the Institute of Education, currently located in Amman, which was jointly created by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for

Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), has continued to receive assistance from UNDP. The preparatory assistance allocation for the years 1980-1981 amounting to approximately \$200,000 has been approved for the purpose of disseminating, through extension activities, the results obtained in research on audio/visual education. It is expected that during this phase, the project will benefit all Arab States in the region. The Institute of Education has provided in-service training for teachers and key education personnel serving the UNRWA/UNESCO school programme. The schools under this joint programme are located mainly in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic. To date, UNDP assistance to the Institute has mounted to \$2.5 million, including the allocation for preparatory assistance mentioned above.

9. The Regional Institute for Training in Statistics and the Arab Planning Institute, which offer training opportunities to students of Arab countries, including Palestinian students, have continued to receive assistance under the UNDP regional programme for Arab States.

10. During the period under review, UNDP also gave special emphasis to the task of implementing the provisions of General Assembly resolution 33/147 of 20 December 1978, entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people". Acting on the basis of that resolution, as well as Governing Council decision 79/18, of 26 June 1979, which the Economic and Social Council took note of at its second regular session of 1979 and by the Assembly at its thirty-fourth session (resolution 34/133 of 14 December 1979), the Administrator proceeded to prepare actual design and implementation plans for the concrete projects called for by resolution 33/147. Eighteen specific projects have been approved by the Governing Council, following review by the Administrator in consultation with agencies and organizations specified in resolution 33/147, based on proposals emanating from the work of an interagency task force. The Governing Council, in approving for implementation these projects proposed by the Administrator, authorized the Administrator to draw up to \$3.5 million from the Programme Reserve for their financing.

11. As preparations for implementation proceeded during the course of 1980, the Administrator concluded that the extensive programme and managerial requirements of the activity necessitated the appointment of a Co-ordinator with direct responsibility for detailed implementation of the projects, under the personal supervision of the Administrator. Accordingly, in September 1980, he designated the senior adviser to the Administrator for this purpose, in agreement with the parties directly concerned.

12. The 18 projects approved for implementation by the Governing Council on the recommendation of the Administrator are, with the single exception of a project located in the Syrian Arab Republic, to be carried out in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. There has, therefore, been primary concentration on these 17 projects, the project for the Syrian Arab Republic to be designed and implemented as soon as operations have commenced satisfactorily in the area of principal concentration.

13. For all projects, regardless of location, the Administrator and the Co-ordinator have been in continuous contact with the Governments concerned and with representatives of the Palestinian people and have received indispensable advice and support from them. These consultations, which have been lengthy, but fruitful, resulted in agreement in September 1980 to proceed as quickly as possible with the implementation of 10 of the 17 projects, through direct implementation by UNDP itself. Since that date, detailed proposals for implementation of 6 of the 10 projects have been prepared, with the assistance of international consultants, and cleared with all parties concerned. Operations are expected to commence prior to mid-1981. Plans for the remaining approved projects will be fully developed shortly thereafter.

C. United Nations Children's Fund

[Original: English]

1. West Bank and Gaza

14. The Executive Board of UNICEF, at its 1980 session, approved a commitment of \$495,000 from general resources in support of these activities during the period 1980-1982. The Board further approved an amount of \$700,000, subject to availability of specific-purpose contributions to permit the full implementation of this proposal during the period 1980-1982.

15. The proposed co-operation aims at the upgrading and development of health, education and social welfare services. In the field of health, 21 maternal and child health centres in the Gaza Strip and 50 centres in the West Bank will be upgraded through the provision of supplies and equipment, including drugs and training of midwives. In non-formal education, upgrading of the El Ala'iyah School for Blind Children in the West Bank and equipping of the new Vocational Rehabilitation Centre for the Handicapped in Gaza, through the provision of required supplies and equipment for vocational training activities, will be undertaken. In addition, support is proposed for the upgrading, expansion and operation of the El Bir Vocational School for Boys in the West Bank, which benefits 100 boys annually, and the youth vocational rehabilitation centres in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. In social welfare, support will be extended for the upgrading of 150 kindergartens in the West Bank and 30 in the Gaza Strip through the provision of teaching supplies and equipment and furniture. Additionally, in-service training of 275 kindergarten teachers (200 in the West Bank and 75 in the Gaza Strip) will be supported.

16. Up to the present time, 60 kindergarten teachers have undergone training and arrangements are being made to procure supplies.

2. United Nations Children's Fund assistance to Palestinians in Lebanon

17. A three-year proposal (1980-1983), which was approved by the 1980 Executive Board of UNICEF (\$600,000 from general resources and \$900,000 "noted"), aims at the upgrading and development of health, education and social welfare services, as well as the improvement of water supply and environmental sanitation activities. Although health services of the Palestinian refugees is the primary responsibility of UNRWA, UNICEF will support the Agency's preventive health measures for women and children in the camps. For this purpose, UNICEF would provide supplies and equipment for 20 maternal and child health centres, oral rehydration salts and vaccines to an estimated value of \$90,000 (included in the above commitment) during the project period 1980-1983.

18. During the first half of 1980, UNICEF staff time was concentrated on planning and negotiations with counterparts to lay the basis for implementing the three-year project. The achievements during the six-month implementation period, which followed the preparatory phase, are set forth below.

(a) Health services

19. Two new maternal and child health centres (one in the Beqaa and the second in Myeh Myeh Camp) were established and 10 existing ones upgraded with UNICEF basic and complementary equipment. The upgrading is intended to expand activities to include more primary health care, strengthening health education, nutrition and environmental sanitation in the camps. For this purpose, UNICEF is providing transport for a health mobile team and audio-visual aids for promotional and supervisory activities. As regards manpower training, two in-service training courses, of two weeks' duration each, were carried out for 24 maternal and child health staff and 19 public health inspectors. The programme included, among other essential subjects, training in the use and maintenance of UNICEF-provided equipment. A UNICEF delegation, headed by the Regional Director attended a session of these courses and was greatly impressed by the methodology adopted for practical training. Furthermore, three groups of 20 health volunteers each, who were selected from among the camp population, underwent an intensive training programme. Their training was sponsored by the General Union of Palestinian Women (GUPW) and UNICEF and co-sponsored by the Lebanese Family Planning Association and the Palestinian Red Crescent Society. The inputs of UNICEF included training grants for the above activities.

(b) Emergency programme - 1980

20. The attacks on Palestinian camps and dwellings in South Lebanon around mid-1980 resulted in the displacement of a large number of Palestinian families, thus creating an emergency need for chlorination and sanitation supplies and equipment for shelters and hospitals. Based on a request from the Palestinian Red Crescent Society, the UNICEF Executive Director released \$US 45,000 from his EMR Reserve Fund which, together with an unspent balance of \$11,000 remaining from a 1979 release of \$100,000, were used for the provision of chlorinators, chemijets and sludge pumps, water-testing equipment and disinfectants.

3. United Nations Children's Fund assistance to Palestinians in Jordan, 1980

(a) General background

21. In Jordan, Palestinians are considered Jordanian citizens and enjoy the same benefits and services from the Jordanian health services as all other citizens. Of an estimated 1,150,000 Palestinians living in Jordan, 699,553 are refugees registered with UNRWA; one third of the registered population live in UNRWA-run camps.

22. A recent census carried out by the Ministry of Occupied Territories, which is in charge of Palestinian affairs, showed that 48 per cent of the Palestinians in the camps are children and 32 per cent are mothers. A number of surveys and studies undertaken by this Ministry have indicated a need to strengthen services for the camp population. There is also a general shortage of drinking water, and sanitary and sewage-disposal facilities need improvement. Health facilities are limited to a number of UNRWA-run health centres, which provided mainly curative services. The primary and secondary schools run by UNRWA cater for around 40 per cent of the school age children. There is a shortage of pre-vocational training facilities for women and girls, many of whom are illiterate, and there is a great need to develop and expand the facilities catering for pre-school children. In May 1980, the Executive Board approved a recommendation (\$420,000 from general resources; \$1,800,000 "noted") for assistance to Palestinian children and mothers in Jordan with a yearly allocation of \$US 140,000 for a three-year duration. Implementation of the programme started effectively in June 1980 in the following fields:

(b) Health

23. In June 1980, UNICEF started supporting the UNRWA preventive health services programme in refugee camps and provided different types of vaccines, syringes and needles for the immunization activities of UNRWA, which benefited 20,000 children.

24. Assistance in the form of basic equipment, ORS and other drugs was also extended to UNRWA health centres to upgrade their maternal and child health services. Approximately 40,000 children and mothers benefited from the services of those centres.

25. Furthermore, UNICEF made available the services of a part-time health education consultant, who helped the Palestinian Family Welfare Association plan and implement a health education campaign in refugee camps. A specific contribution went into planning and conducting a training programme for health education volunteers and for the production of local audio-visual aids.

(c) Water supply and environmental sanitation

26. A special programme is being developed with the Ministry of Occupied Territories and UNRWA for the provision and extension of safe drinking water and adequate sanitary and sewage-disposal facilities. This programme will be implemented subject to the availability of a specific-purpose contribution.



(d) Non-formal education

27. The United Nations Children's Fund supported the upgrading of five pre-vocational rehabilitation centres for girls and women supervised by the Palestinian Family Welfare Association. These centres offer training courses in knitting, sewing, typing, literacy and home economics. During 1980, approximately 100 girls benefited from this training.

(e) Family welfare services

28. Assistance was also extended by UNICEF to the Palestinian Family Welfare Association to strengthen child-care services in refugee camps. Five kindergartens were provided with indoor and outdoor play equipment and their staff underwent refresher in-service training. Around 120 children were enrolled in these kindergartens.

3. Report on UNICEF assistance to Palestinian children and mothers in the Syrian Arab Republic

(a) Background information

29. Out of an estimated total of 240,000 Palestinians in the Syrian Arab Republic, 160,000 (67 per cent) of them were living in refugee camps in 1979. There are 17 such camps in the country, with a population ranging from 2,000 to over 10,000.

30. In the Syrian Arab Republic, Palestinians have access to all services offered by the Government.

(b) Existing services

31. Besides provision of some social services by UNRWA, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and various voluntary organizations operate the following service centres for Palestinians: four kindergartens; some literacy and sewing centres for girls and women, organized by the General Union of Palestinian Women; two institutions for children deprived of normal family life and one vocational training school, run by the General Organization for Palestinian Affairs, affiliated with the Syrian Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs; and an orphanage for 23 children.

(c) Experience during 1980

32. A commitment of \$US 255,000 from general resources was approved for the period 1980-1982 (together with \$600,000 "noted").

33. In response to the urgent and immediate needs, the 1980 allocation (\$75,000) was solely used for the purpose of supplying basic equipment to the institutions already providing services for children and women:

(a) In the field of health, equipment for 19 maternal and child health centres, syringes and vaccines were supplied to UNRWA to strengthen their medical services;

(b) In the field of non-formal education, sewing and knitting machines, a washing machine and typewriters were supplied for the vocational school which was run by the General Organization for Palestinian Affairs and trained 100 girls;

(c) In the field of social welfare, indoor, outdoor and kitchen equipment were provided to the kindergarten in Yarmouk camp, which cared for 500 children. This kindergarten is devoid of any sort of equipment. Nevertheless, it is staffed by qualified personnel, who had undergone its training with the Syrian Women's General Union. Moreover, two large washing machines, two large refrigerators and one small van were provided to the two child-care institutions caring, respectively, for 100 boys and 70 girls.

(d) Summary of assistance (excluding freight)

In United States dollars

Health

Syringes and needles for vaccination	7,500
Vaccines	15,600
Maternal and child health equipment	9,100

Non-formal education

Sewing and knitting machines; washing machine	1,800
Typewriters	5,500

Social welfare

Two refrigerators	2,500
Two washing machines	8,000
One small van	3,600
Indoor equipment for kindergarten	8,700
Outdoor equipment for kindergarten	3,100
Kitchen equipment for kindergarten	1,900
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	67,300

34. During 1981 and 1982, UNICEF co-operation will aim at the upgrading of existing services centres and the establishment of new facilities for the provision of health, education and child-care services. Assistance will include training grants and expert services in marketing and child care.

D. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

[Original: English]

35. General Assembly resolution 35/111 of 5 December 1980, was duly brought to the attention of the relevant UNCTAD divisions.

(a) Assistance to the Palestinian people

36. Pursuant to Conference resolution 109 (V) of 1 June 1979, a study on assistance to the Palestinian people is being prepared by the UNCTAD secretariat, with the assistance of consultants, within the context of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade. This study, as well as similar studies being prepared on Namibia and South Africa, will take into account the recommendations of the General Assembly and of the Economic and Social Council in this regard. Following its discussion of this question at its twentieth session in March 1980, the Trade and Development Board adopted resolution 215 (XX) of 25 March 1980, which reads, in part, as follows:

"Recommends that the special problems of the peoples and countries under colonial domination or foreign occupation should be explicitly recognized and integrated in the formulation of the new International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade;

"Further recommends that the United Nations system, including the United Nations Development Programme, should, during the Third United Nations Development Decade, mobilize adequate resources for providing assistance to national liberation movements recognized by regional intergovernmental organizations and to the peoples under colonial domination and foreign occupation."

37. The study on assistance to the Palestinian people is designed to identify the main development problems facing the Palestinian people with a view to formulating proposals on assistance to them in the context of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade. In this context, besides undertaking a review of social and economic trends in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the study will attempt to examine the main features of the economic and institutional changes taking place in those territories and how those changes affect the social and economic situation of the Palestinian people, including the prospects for their future development. The preliminary analysis has also indicated the need to examine the impact on the social and economic situation of the Palestinian people of a number of measures taken over the last decade by the authorities of the occupied territories of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, including those related to the control of water resources and its distribution, of marketing and trade of products produced by the Palestinian population, of monetary and financial flows, land policy etc.

38. Work on the study is expected to be completed during 1981. In the context of the preparation of the study, consultations have been held by the UNCTAD secretariat with the national liberation movement concerned. Also, a field trip

to Beirut, Cairo and Damascus was undertaken by a consultant in September 1980 to obtain necessary data and information. The UNCTAD secretariat also hopes to seek advice from consultants from the region concerned on the findings and conclusions of the study, as well as on concrete proposals for assistance to the Palestinian people within the context of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade. The secretariat will then finalize its report containing this study, as well as the other studies on Namibia and South Africa and the proposals on assistance to the peoples concerned, and submit it to the Trade and Development Board at its twenty-third session scheduled to be held in September 1981.

(b) Attendance at UNCTAD meetings by the national liberation movements recognized by the regional intergovernmental organization

29. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 3237 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974, observers for the Palestine Liberation Organization have been invited to various meetings of UNCTAD and will continue to receive similar invitations in the future. During the period under review, observers for the Palestine Liberation Organization attended the following UNCTAD meetings:

- (a) Twenty-first session of the Trade and Development Board (15-26 September 1980);
- (b) Meeting of Governmental Experts on Economic Co-operation among Developing Countries (3-14 November 1980);
- (c) Committee on Transfer of Technology (17-28 November 1980).

E. United Nations Industrial Development Organization

[Original: English]

40. Pursuant to the adoption of two resolutions by the Economic and Social Council (2026 (LXI) of 4 August 1976 and 2100 (LXIII) of 3 August 1977), the secretariat of UNIDO contacted the observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization in Vienna and received, through his office, a list of technical assistance requests for the Palestinian people. These were:

- (a) Survey of the manufacturing industry in the West Bank and Gaza Strip;
- (b) Training in industrial development.

41. These requests, which were incorporated in a note to the Permanent Committee by the Executive Director on technical assistance to the Palestinian people (ID/B/C.3/66) were the subject of recommendations by the Permanent Committee at its tenth session (ID/B/211, para. 163), which were subsequently approved by the Industrial Development Board at its twelfth session. 1/

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1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-third Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/33/16), para. 16.

42. At its thirteenth session, the Permanent Committee (May 1980) took note of the second progress report by the Executive Director on "Technical assistance to the Palestinian people" (ID/B/C.3/92) and recommended to the Industrial Development Board at its fourteenth session that it take all possible steps effectively to provide and increase the technical assistance to the Palestinian people described in the Executive Director's report.

43. The Board subsequently adopted the report of the Permanent Committee, approving the following five projects in the industrial sector identified by the Inter-Agency Task Force on assistance to the Palestinian people, established in response to General Assembly resolution 33/147:

- (a) Feasibility study for a cement plant in the West Bank;
- (b) Feasibility study for a canning plant for citrus fruits;
- (c) Assistance to the plastics industry;
- (d) Assistance to the pharmaceutical industry;
- (e) Assistance to small-scale industries and workshops.

(a) Access to the West Bank and Gaza Strip

44. In accordance with the recommendation of the Permanent Committee at its thirteenth session, the UNIDO secretariat wrote to the Permanent Mission of Israel to UNIDO and requested the concurrence of the Government of Israel to grant access to the West Bank and Gaza Strip to enable the organization to implement those projects. The Permanent Mission of Israel replied that it could not permit UNIDO officials access to the West Bank and Gaza Strip to implement projects framed in close co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization. This was reported to the Permanent Committee at its fourteenth session by the Executive Director in his third progress report on technical assistance to the Palestinian people (ID/B/C.3/97).

45. At its 161st meeting, the Permanent Committee "deplored and condemned the obstacles" placed in the way of the Special Inter-Agency Task Force by the Israeli authorities, particularly their refusal to permit UNIDO officials access to the West Bank and Gaza Strip to implement projects.

46. The Permanent Committee also expressed its concern that, of the seven industrial projects approved by the Industrial Development Board within a general programme of technical assistance to the Palestinian people, only one project was operational.

47. Based on the recommendation of the Permanent Committee at its fourteenth session to take all possible measures to increase efficient technical assistance to the Palestinian people, the UNIDO secretariat, in a letter dated 22 January 1981 addressed to the Permanent Mission of Israel to UNIDO, requested once more the

concurrence of the Government of Israel in providing access to the West Bank and Gaza Strip to implement UNIDO technical assistance projects. In the event of a positive reply, the UNIDO secretariat will immediately begin implementing those projects.

(b) Participation in group training programmes

48. In pursuance of the decisions of the Permanent Committee and the Industrial Development Board, UNIDO offered several group training programmes to Palestinian participants. So far, three Palestinian participants have attended the following programmes:

- (a) In-plant Group Training Programme in the Field of Repair and Maintenance of Bio-Medical Electronic Equipment (Hungary, 7 January-14 March 1980);
- (b) Group Training Programme in the Field of Production and Application of Synthetic Fibers (Austria, 6 October-7 November 1980);
- (c) In-Plant Group Training Programme in the Field of Plastics Technology (Austria, 6 October-14 November 1980).

49. The list of 1981 Group Training Programmes organized by UNIDO has been given to the observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization in Vienna. According to their interest, similar offers will be made to accept Palestinian participants in these programmes.

F. United Nations Environment Programme

[Original: English]

50. The Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), at its eighth session, requested the Executive Director in its decision 8/4 of 28 April 1980, to ensure the implementation of General Assembly resolution 34/133 within the sphere of the responsibilities of the Programme.

51. The United Nations Environment Programme, through its Regional Office for Western Asia, entered into consultations with the Palestine Liberation Organization with a view to developing a project proposal for assistance to the Palestinian people. At present and as a result of those consultations, a project proposal entitled "Training Course for Environmental Health Officers on Problems of Water Supply, Sanitation and Health for the Palestinian People", has been developed at an estimated cost of \$US 78,500 to UNEP. The activity should be completed in December 1981. The Executive Director of UNEP discussed the modalities of implementing the proposed project with the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme in January 1981. The purpose of these consultations was to ensure that the envisaged training course would be well co-ordinated with UNDP assistance to the Palestinian people in the field of health and also to explore the possibilities of UNDP co-operation in implementing the project in the context of the agreement reached by the Administrator of UNDP with all parties concerned.

### G. World Food Programme

[Original: English]

52. The World Food Programme gave no assistance to the Palestine Liberation Organization during 1980, as no request for such assistance was received by the Programme.

### H. International Labour Organisation

[Original: English]

53. In the 1980-1981 biennium, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) offered fellowships to four persons designated, after consultation with the Palestine Liberation Organization, to attend training courses at the International Centre for Advanced Technical and Vocational Training in Turin, Italy. It is hoped that these fellowships will be implemented in 1981. The ILO has also awarded a fellowship to the Dean of the Hebron Polytechnic Institute to attend a course on the management of training institutions to be held at Turin from 27 April to 3 July 1981. Applications for fellowships have also been sought from at least two senior professors of the same Institute, who might be interested in attending a three-month three-module course starting in September 1981 and covering training systems, training methodology and audio-visual aids.

54. In March 1980, the Director-General of the ILO assigned a mission, composed of two officials who had taken part in the two preceding missions in 1978 and 1979, to go to Israel and the occupied Arab territories to complete and bring up to date their information and to examine on the spot the situation of Arab workers. Members of the mission had numerous conversations, working and private meetings with various persons and visited several parts of Israel and the occupied Arab territories. In meetings with the municipal authorities and trade union leaders of the West Bank and with Israeli and Arab officials of the labour and other administration services, various aspects of equality of opportunity and treatment of the Arab workers in the occupied territories as regards employment, conditions of work and social benefits as well as trade union activities, both in the territories and in Israel, were discussed. The mission was guided in its work by the principles and objectives laid down in the Constitution of the ILO and in various conventions and recommendations, particularly those concerning discrimination in employment and occupation and freedom of association. In particular, the mission studied the measures taken by the Israeli authorities with a view to giving effect to the recommendations contained in its previous reports.

55. The report of the third mission was issued as an appendix to the report of the Director-General submitted to the International Labour Conference at its sixty-sixth session in 1980.

56. The ILO participated in the Inter-Agency Meetings held in February 1979 and in the work of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Assistance to the Palestinian People aimed at identifying the social and economic needs of the Palestinian people and developing related technical co-operation activities. On the basis of the findings

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and recommendations of those meetings, several projects were selected for possible implementation by the various agencies. The ILO is taking steps to obtain UNDP approval and funds to implement a number of projects in its field of competence, namely industrial management training at the Turin Centre and vocational training for women at the seven training centres of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

#### I. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

[Original: English]

57. In pursuance of Economic and Social Council resolution 2100 (LXIII) and other relevant resolutions of the Council and the General Assembly, FAO has continued to assist the Palestinian people in full consultation and co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and, more particularly, the Palestinian National Fund. This assistance has included the following:

(a) During the second half of 1980, FAO participated in the two seminars covering the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, held at Arusha, the United Republic of Tanzania from 14 to 18 July and at Vienna from 25 to 29 August, in response to the request by the United Nations General Assembly in December 1979. Also, FAO participated in the International Day of Solidarity for the Palestinian People organized at Geneva and New York on 28 November 1980.

(b) In December 1980, FAO participated in the Inter-Agency Meeting organized by UNDP at New York. The progress made in 18 approved UNDP projects was discussed with emphasis on agencies' support to move the programme ahead.

58. Under its Technical Co-operation Programme, FAO has financed three small-scale projects to assist the Palestinian National Fund. The first project was approved in 1978 in the amount of \$US 101,500. It provides for six 12-month fellowships for specialized training in agricultural development and is under way. The second project was intended to provide assistance in the compilation and tabulation of agricultural data in the West Bank and Gaza area. It was approved in 1978 in the amount of \$10,000 and has now been completed. The third project, designed to provide the services of an Agricultural Planning Senior Officer for three weeks, was approved in early 1980 in the amount of \$21,000 and is also being implemented. A fourth project is now under consideration for further processing of agricultural data.

59. Finally, the Palestine Liberation Organization, in its capacity as representative of the Palestinian people, has been invited to attend the eleventh session of the Commission for Controlling the Desert Locust in the Near East (October 1980), the ninth session of the Near East Agricultural Planning Commission (December 1980), the Committee on World Food Security Planning (December 1980), the Committee on World Food Security (17 March to 3 April 1980), the FAO/UNFPA Workshop on Population and Agricultural/Rural Planning (24 September to 10 October 1980) as well as the fifteenth FAO Regional Conference for the Near East (April 1981).



J. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

[Original: English]

60. General Assembly resolution 35/111 of 5 December 1980 was brought to the attention of the Executive Board of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) at its one hundred and twelfth session (13 to 29 May 1981).

1. Co-operation with the United Nations Development Programme

61. Since the adoption by the Governing Council of UNDP of decision 79/18 of 26 June 1979, which authorizes the Administrator to draw upon the Programme Reserve up to the amount of \$3.5 million for the implementation of project proposals recommended by the Administrator, UNESCO has been in regular contact with UNDP and has expressed its readiness to examine modalities of co-operation for the implementation of projects within the competence of UNESCO. It is understood that consultations are still under way between UNDP and the authorities concerned.

2. Assistance through the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

62. Assistance continued to be provided by UNESCO in the form of expertise, fellowships and equipment to the Palestinian people either through the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) or at the request of the Palestine Liberation Organization, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Conference and the decisions of the Executive Board of UNESCO. A brief description of that assistance is set forth below.

63. The approved Programme and Budget for 1981-1983 foresees the renewal of the agreement between UNESCO and UNRWA for 1981-1983 and continues technical responsibilities for the education programme for Palestinian refugees by UNESCO. That organization continues to second specialists to the UNRWA/UNESCO Department of Education to plan and supervise the operation of the schools and centres in Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and to provide such other assistance as may be needed for the planning and effective implementation of the education programme for Palestinian refugees, particularly through the improvement of certain educational standards. For this programme, 20 Professional posts, including the Director, are provided, as well as educational supplies and equipment.

3. Fellowships to Palestinians under the Regular Programme, including the Participation Programme

64. During the budgetary period 1979/1980, 10 fellowships were granted to Palestinian students under the Regular Programme and 11 under the Participation Programme.

4. Special accounts for the fellowships programme for Palestinian students

65. Pursuant to recommendation 33-34 adopted by the Conference of Ministers of Education and those Responsible for Economic Planning in the Arab States, held at Abu Dhabi from 7 to 14 November 1977, recommending that the Arab States sponsor the establishment of a UNESCO trust fund to finance scholarships for Palestinian students, UNESCO has opened a Special Account for that fund and has received contributions from Iraq, Morocco and the Syrian Arab Republic. Another Special Account (funds-in-trust) was opened with a \$50,000 contribution from the Government of Iraq, to finance fellowships for Palestinian students.

5. Palestinian Open University

66. In October 1980, UNESCO submitted the Feasibility Study of the Palestinian Open University to the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development and to the Palestine Liberation Organization. During a tripartite meeting, held in November 1980 in Kuwait, the recommendations of the feasibility study were approved by both organizations.

67. At its twenty-first session, the General Conference adopted resolution 1/06 of 21 October 1980, requesting the Director-General to continue his efforts to carry out this project and, in so doing, to use all the resources placed at his disposal and to make the necessary contacts with the parties concerned by this project.

6. General Conference resolution concerning educational and cultural institutions in the occupied Arab territories and the protection of cultural property in Jerusalem

68. Following resolutions adopted at its previous session, the General Conference, at its twenty-first session, adopted resolution 14.1 of 27 October 1980, which, inter alia, invited the Director-General to keep a permanent watch on Israel's implementation of the resolutions and decisions of the General Conference and the Executive Board relating to educational and cultural institutions in the occupied Arab territories, including Jerusalem, and to send, for this purpose, such missions as he might deem appropriate. The General Conference also adopted resolution 4.14 of 27 October 1980 which, inter alia, recommended that the World Heritage Committee should speed up the procedure for including the City of Jerusalem in the "World Heritage list" and that the Committee should consider its inclusion in the list of "World Heritage in Danger".

69. The Director-General used all means at his disposal to give effect to those resolutions and, in particular, entrusted a personal representative to visit Jerusalem on many occasions in connexion with the protection of the cultural heritage of the Holy City.

7. International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People

70. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 32/40 B of 2 December 1977, the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People was observed at UNESCO headquarters on 1 December 1980. A group of representatives of the Arab States to UNESCO organized a ceremony in which a representative of the Director-General, the Director of the United Nations Information Centre, the Secretary-General of the Islamic Conference, the Chairmen of the Group of 77 and the Group of Non-Aligned Countries, those of different regional groups as well as the doyen of the Arab Diplomatic Corps in France and the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) participated. The PLO also organized an exhibition of Palestinian National Art, which was inaugurated by the Director-General of UNESCO that same day.

K. International Civil Aviation Organization

[Original: English]

71. As indicated in previous contributions, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is willing to co-operate, within its mandate, with ECWA and UNDP on the implementation of Council resolutions 2026 (LXI) and 2100 (LXIII). In accordance with a decision taken by the Assembly of ICAO, the Palestine Liberation Organization is entitled to participate as an observer in the sessions and the work of the ICAO Assembly and other international conferences convened under the auspices of ICAO and in the regional meetings dealing with matters of interest to the PLO. In this regard, the Palestine Liberation Organization was represented by observers at the twenty-third session of the Assembly, held in September and October 1980.

L. World Health Organization

[Original: English]

72. In compliance with Economic and Social Council resolutions 2026 (XLI) and 2100 (LXIII), and as a result of various World Health Assembly resolutions calling for the provision of assistance to the Palestinian people, WHO has carried out the activities described below.

73. The organization has, as in the past, provided assistance through close collaboration with UNRWA and, in particular, has continued to send a number of staff to the Agency for education and health services. In addition, WHO also supplies vaccine to the Agency and some problems resulting in temporary shortages now seem to have been overcome.

74. An annual grant is provided to the Palestine Liberation Organization for payment of salary differentials for some physicians and technicians employed by the Palestine Red Crescent Society and this was increased substantially in 1980. The major portion of this allocation is intended to cover the payment of incentives in addition to other inputs, such as supplies, equipment and possibly fellowships.

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75. In July 1980, a further visit was carried out by a WHO specialist in the field of mental health. The object of this visit was to review the ongoing activities and make proposals with a view to strengthening the mental health programme in the territories. It is envisaged that, as a result of those collaborative efforts, the mental health coverage for the population concerned will be extended and the treatment facilities will be strengthened. One fellowship was awarded for studies in this field and has been completed, and further candidatures are currently being processed.

76. Several missions have been carried out in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip by an adviser from the Maternal and Child Health and Extended Immunization Programmes. In follow-up to these missions, WHO has provided further funding in 1980 to support tuberculin testing and the BCG programme among school children. The organization has also funded the purchase of SALK vaccine for use in a successful combined polio immunization programme as well as 140,000 additional doses of measles vaccine for the ongoing campaign. A technical mission was planned for April 1981 aimed at a reduction in polio cases.

77. In follow-up to the technical support already provided for the planning and implementation of a programme for oral rehydration therapy in diarrhoeal diseases, WHO has supported the special effort being made to evaluate carefully the reduction of mortality as a result of this programme and to finalize the procedures for analysis. The evaluation, in which a WHO staff member participated, indicates that the programme is progressing satisfactorily with a drop in hospital admissions and mortality.

78. In collaboration with the competent authorities, steps have already been taken to organize a visit early in the summer of 1981 to work out a detailed plan of action to investigate the oral health sector in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

79. A consultant will also visit the West Bank to initiate an evaluation of malnutrition clinics in order to identify risk factors.

80. In addition to the direct assistance referred to above, WHO has also been involved in the planning of two interagency projects.

81. As a result of the work of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Assistance to the Palestinian People and the subsequent Inter-Agency meeting at Geneva in April 1979, UNDP envisages setting up two projects covering the fields of health manpower development, and development and strengthening of health institutions. In October 1980, a meeting was held between representatives of UNDP headquarters and WHO to discuss the possibility of WHO support to these projects. It was felt that those projects would dovetail very well into ongoing efforts of WHO in those programme areas and the organization assured UNDP of its readiness to assist in the implementation by providing technical support. The organization has, in fact, already assisted in the election of a consultant to carry out those projects.

82. In November 1980, discussions took place between representatives of UNEP and WHO regarding the collaboration and possible participation of WHO in a UNEP-funded Training Course for Environmental Health Officers on Problems of Water Supply, Sanitation and Health for the Palestinian People. In response, WHO has provided

a consultant to study the needs of sanitarians and to draw up the programme for the course, in consultation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and UNRWA.

83. The Special Committee of Experts to study the health conditions of the inhabitants of the occupied territories, established by the World Health Assembly, carried out a further visit to the territories in April 1980. As well as recommending action to be taken by the responsible authorities, the Committee requested WHO to strengthen the assistance it has already instituted for these territories in the past; and certain of the activities referred to above result directly from the Committee's observations.

#### M. World Bank

[Original: English]

84. The World Bank's Articles of Agreement require that loans be made to, or guaranteed by, member Governments. As indicated in previous reports on this subject, World Bank lending has been directed increasingly to the needs of the poorest member countries, focusing, in particular, on the most disadvantaged population groups within countries; hence, improvement in the economic well-being of the Palestinian people is a matter of obvious concern to the Bank. In this context, however, it is important to point out that, because Bank Group-assisted projects entail substantial financial commitments on the part of the borrowing Governments, it is clear that decisions concerning the benefits to specific population groups from such projects must be made in the first instance by the Governments concerned.

85. Some of the projects which the Bank has helped finance in member countries in which Palestinian people reside have benefited Palestinians, although the extent of such benefits would be difficult to quantify; for example, in some of the countries, projects have improved the living conditions in urban areas, including some areas in which Palestinian people are concentrated. The Bank would wish to re-emphasize that the Bank Group stands ready, in consultation with and at the request of member Governments concerned, to help prepare and finance development projects which meet the usual Bank Group criteria and which would particularly benefit the Palestinian people.

#### N. International Monetary Fund

[Original: English]

86. General Assembly resolution 35/111 of 5 December 1980, has been brought to the attention of the Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund, as had been the case for Economic and Social Council resolutions 2026 (LXI) of 4 August 1976 and 2100 (LXIII) of 3 August 1977 on earlier occasions. In general terms, Fund financial assistance to member countries has greatly increased during 1980 and the resources committed during that year rose to more than \$12 billion, provided to a

large spectrum of member countries in all geographical areas. Such resources are provided in order to assist member countries in facing balance-of-payments difficulties.

O. Universal Postal Union

[Original: French]

87. As in 1979, Universal Postal Union assistance concerned training activities for members of the Palestinian people. As a result of scholarships already granted by the Executive Council in 1979, two Palestinians continue to receive long-term training (1979-1983) at the Institut supérieur postal arabe (ISPA).

88. The Union also participated in the ceremony marking the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on 28 November 1980.

89. The Union is still prepared to implement the project concerning the training of five more Palestinians, provided that the necessary funding is found (see E/1979/61).

P. International Telecommunication Union

[Original: English]

90. In response to Economic and Social Council resolution 2100 (LXIII) of 3 August 1977 and General Assembly resolution 35/111 of 5 December 1980, it should be mentioned that the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) does not finance a technical co-operation programme from its regular budget. Technical assistance is provided to developing countries either through the Union's participation in UNDP or through financing by other means, such as trust funds. Under these circumstances, the possibilities for the Union to provide help to the Palestinian people are strictly limited.

91. The Union maintains contact with representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization at Geneva, in order to discuss their needs in the telecommunication field and to invite them to attend conferences of the Union as observers.

92. The Union has also been in contact with member Administrations, in particular in the Arab countries, in order to emphasize the need to train Palestinians in telecommunications. The Union has been able to contribute indirectly towards the training of Palestinians through UNDP or trust fund projects executed by ITU at the training centres for member Administrations in the Arab countries. Many Palestinians are enrolled as trainees or act as instructors at a number of the Arab Telecommunication Training Centres.

93. The Union, as the executing agency for the follow-up project for the implementation of the Middle East and Mediterranean Telecommunication Network, now

called the MEDARABTEL project, invited, and continues to invite, Palestinian representatives to participate in the technical seminars within the scope of that project. There have been a total of five seminars to date and fellowships have been awarded to enable participation by the Palestine Liberation Organization. The MEDARABTEL project has been programmed over the period 1979-1983 on a cost-sharing basis between a number of Arab States and UNDP.

94. Palestinian telecommunications engineers attended a traffic engineering seminar in Turkey (5-16 May 1980) and two engineers, nominated by the Palestine Liberation Organization, attended the seminar on tariffs, held at Valetta, Malta, from 23 February to 6 March 1981.

#### Q. World Meteorological Organization

[Original: English]

95. After careful study of the national projects considered at the meeting of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Assistance to the Palestinian People, held on 15 and 16 February 1979 on this question, it appears that the World Meteorological Organization would only be able to provide assistance in the form of fellowships for specialized training in applied meteorology and hydrology. This is in accordance with the decision of the Eighth WMO Congress, in response to General Assembly resolution 32/90 of 13 December 1977. Therefore WMO looks forward to receiving such proposals.

96. General Assembly resolution 35/111 of 5 December 1980 and other related resolutions will, of course, be submitted to the WMO Executive Committee in June 1981.

#### R. Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization

[Original: English]

97. As a result of consultations between IMCO and UNRWA, a proposal is being prepared for submission to the appropriate IMCO organs on the subject of assistance to the Palestinian people. Under this proposal, member States of IMCO would be requested to consider the possibility of either offering fellowships to Palestinian trainees in the maritime field or accepting such trainees in their national maritime academies. Under the proposal, offers may be made either to IMCO or directly to UNRWA, subject to arrangements to be agreed in this regard at a later stage.

98. It is envisaged that the Technical Co-operation Committee of IMCO will be able to consider this proposal and make suitable recommendations thereon to the Council sometime during 1981.

S. World Intellectual Property Organization

[Original: English]

99. The Director-General of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) will draw the attention of the governing bodies of WIPO, at their sessions in November 1981, to Economic and Social Council resolutions 2026 (LXI) and 2100 (LXIII) entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people".

100. Under the 1980 WIPO Training Programme, two fellowships were awarded in the field of industrial property and one in the field of copyright to fellows selected from a group of 12 candidatures submitted by UNRWA.

101. An invitation to propose candidates for the 1981 WIPO Fellowship Programme in the fields of copyright and industrial property was sent to the Permanent Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization at Geneva and to the Commissioner-General of UNRWA and the Secretary of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

102. The Director-General of WIPO was represented at the meeting, held at Geneva on 28 November 1980, to commemorate the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

103. The International Bureau of WIPO has informed the Permanent Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization that it looks forward to continued co-operation and remains at his disposal for further discussions concerning the establishment and implementation of concrete projects to ensure the improvement of the social and economic conditions of the Palestinian people.

104. The International Bureau of WIPO has kept the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Western Asia informed of its activities for the benefit of the Palestinian people and has welcomed any suggestions concerning co-ordination of efforts, as mentioned in paragraph 1 of Economic and Social Council resolution 2100 (LXIII).

T. International Fund for Agricultural Development

[Original: English]

105. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) attended two meetings held at Geneva, namely the Inter-Agency Task Force on Assistance to the Palestinian People, held on 15 and 16 February 1979, and the Inter-Agency Meeting on the Implementation of General Assembly resolution 33/147 on Assistance to the Palestinian people, held from 30 April to 2 May 1979;

106. Although IFAD is following this question with close interest and concern, the Fund is restricted by its mandate to financing agricultural development projects in its developing member States.





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INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM ORGANS AND ORGANIZATIONS OF THE  
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UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES  
IN THE NEAR EAST

1. Since May 1950, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has been providing education, health and relief services according to eligibility for Palestine refugees 1/ and their descendants registered for assistance, who numbered 1,863,162 at 31 December 1980.

2. Although there has been no census of Palestinians, the registered refugees are believed to be more than half the total Palestinian population living in Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, Jordan and the occupied territories of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, which constitute the Agency's area of operations. Consequently, UNRWA is a major provider of education, health and welfare services to the Palestinian people. These services have evolved over the years in direct response to the needs of the refugees and the Agency's financial ability to meet them. By the end of 1980, more than \$1.8 billion had been expended by UNRWA on assistance to Palestine refugees. The education services were operated in co-operation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the health services in co-operation with the World Health Organization (WHO).

3. The regular programmes are fully described in the annual reports of the Commissioner-General of UNRWA. For an account of the programme in 1980, the reader is referred to the report covering the period from 1 July 1979 to 30 June 1980. 2/ In brief, in the 1979/80 school year, over 314,000 children received elementary and preparatory (lower secondary) education in 627 UNRWA schools; 8,467 pupils were assisted with their secondary education at local government or private schools; 3/ some 4,700 trainees followed vocational or teacher-training courses at eight UNRWA centres; 354 students were awarded scholarships for university study; modest programmes of pre-school, youth and women's activities and adult craft-training were conducted; and professional in-service training was provided for medical and education personnel. Medical

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1/ Palestine refugees (by UNRWA definition for operations purposes) are persons whose normal residence was Palestine for a minimum of two years preceding the Arab-Israeli conflict in 1948 and who, as a result of this conflict, lost both their homes and their means of livelihood. To be eligible for UNRWA assistance, refugees (and their direct descendants) must be (a) registered with UNRWA; (b) living in the area of UNRWA operations; and (c) in need.

2/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/35/13).

3/ In Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic. Elsewhere all refugee pupils, enrolled in government secondary schools receive their education free of charge.

services were available to about 1.6 million refugees, and supplementary feeding for such vulnerable groups as young children and expectant and nursing mothers. In the camps, the Agency provided environmental sanitation and assistance with repairs to housing of families in special need. Monthly basic rations of flour, rice, sugar and oil were distributed to about 824,000 refugees; and special hardship assistance was given to indigent families. The total cost of financing the services in 1980 was \$183.7 million. The programmes were carried out by some 16,700 employees, mostly teachers, all but a handful of whom are themselves Palestine refugees, under the direction of 97 international staff. 4/

4. The prime determinant of the Agency's ability to meet the needs of the refugees is the level of its financial resources. Given the funds, there are many projects which the Agency would be keen to implement to enhance the opportunities for refugees to become self-supporting, to improve the quality of services and to cater for the special needs of those with particular handicaps. The sad truth is, as the Agency has pointed out repeatedly over the years, that income is insufficient to maintain even the minimum services at the established levels. In 1980, the Agency's income fell short by \$20.7 million of the budget of \$211.3 million. A related problem is that the level of income is not known sufficiently far in advance to permit smooth planning.

5. Nevertheless, within those constraints, a limited number of improvements were possible, of a nature to enhance the efficiency with which services met refugees' needs or to enrich an existing programme. The following paragraphs illustrate but are not exhaustive.

6. In 1980, expenditure on the education programme increased by 20 per cent over 1979, from \$83.4 million to \$100.1 million, accounting for 55 per cent of total expenditure. The major item of additional outlay was on the school education programme, which expends each year to cater for the growing school-age population. In 1979/80, the new intake included over 3,000 pupils more than in 1978/79 and some 252 additional teachers were appointed. Most UNRWA school buildings are operated on a double-shift basis to cope with the numbers of pupils. Some of the buildings urgently require replacement. During the year \$0.7 million were allocated to construct 60 additional class-rooms and specialist units to avoid the necessity of triple-shifting. In 1980 three particularly significant developments occurred in the education programme. The first was the production of a consolidated Biennial Work Plan for the school years 1980/81-1981/82. The second was the implementation of organizational changes in the Fields' and Headquarters' education offices, which included the strengthening of the professional aspects of the UNRWA education system by setting up Education Development Units in Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic and an Education Development Centre in the West Bank. The third was the Agency's take-over from the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) of the pre-school centres in the Gaza

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4/ The total number of approved international staff posts is 120, of which 20 are loaned by UNESCO to provide technical guidance to the education programme, 5 by WHO to provide technical guidance to the health programme, 88 financed from the United Nations budget and 7 financed by UNRWA itself.

Strip, previously run by AFSC. In the vocational training programme, a contribution from the OPEC Fund enabled UNRWA to enlarge four vocational training centres and provide a wider range of courses.

7. Health services accounted for \$31.0 million of total expenditure or 16.9 per cent, an increase of 19.2 per cent over 1979. The quality of the medical services provided at the health centres is under continuing review. Specialist clinics treat tuberculosis, diabetes, cardiovascular disorders, dermatological and rheumatic complaints and eye diseases. An additional number of small clinical laboratories attached to health units were equipped to perform bio-chemical tests previously referred to central laboratories. Special attention was focused on the level of nutrition among infants and young children and their mothers. In response to the high prevalence of diarrhoeal diseases among small children, particularly in summer time, the Agency has, since March 1979, participated in the Gaza Strip in the development of a WHO-assisted project for the implementation of early oral rehydration therapy. In camp sanitation, the Agency participated to the extent of \$294,000 in self-help projects carried out by the refugees to construct drains and pathways in camps throughout the area of operations, to connect sewage systems to local networks, and to continue the provision of private water connexions and latrines to those families still without them. The schemes were undertaken with the co-operation of the local municipal and governmental authorities and, in Lebanon, the Palestine Liberation Organization.

8. The third category of service, the relief programme, involved expenditure in 1980 of \$44.1 million, compared with \$34.4 million in 1979, accounting for 24.0 per cent of the total expenditure. The assistance provided by the relief programme comprises essentially the basic ration, with very limited shelter and welfare assistance. In view of the Agency's scarce resources, the assistance is concentrated on the sector of the refugee population which is the most needy: widows, orphans, the aged, the physically and mentally handicapped, etc. This category of refugees, known as "special hardship cases", has been provided with extra basic rations in Jordan, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. By the end of 1980, some 36,000 persons were benefiting from the extra rations.

9. Again in 1980, Agency operations in Lebanon suffered extensively from local disturbances and Israeli military operations in southern Lebanon, which caused considerable damage to refugee shelters as well as some Agency installations.

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INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM ORGANS AND ORGANIZATIONS  
OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

UNITED NATIONS CENTRE FOR HUMAN SETTLEMENTS (HABITAT)

1. Following the adoption by the Commission on Human Settlements of resolution 3/1 entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people", officials of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitats) met with the Permanent Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization to Habitat. Subsequently, the Executive Director wrote to the Palestine Liberation Organization requesting its views and advice on how Habitat could best provide assistance to the Palestinian people in the field of human settlements. Habitat has subsequently been in continuous contact with the Permanent Observer in Nairobi regarding this matter. The Permanent Observer has informed Habitat that he has conveyed its communication to the headquarters of his organization in Baghdad and that he would communicate with the Centre as soon as a response was received. In the meantime, a number of possible activities are being explored for assistance to the Palestinian people in the field of human settlements. For example, Habitat plans to organize a course on management and public housing programmes, including sites and services, for countries in the Middle East and North Africa which will include the provision of fellowships for suitably qualified Palestinians. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 3237 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974, the Palestine Liberation Organization has also been invited to participate in the annual sessions of the Commission on Human Settlements.
2. The Executive Director has also been in touch with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) regarding the recommendations of the interagency task force on assistance to the Palestinian people, which had been established by the Administrator of UNDP, particularly those related to human settlements (housing). As Habitat had participated in and contributed to the work of this interagency task force, the Executive Director enquired how Habitat could assist in the implementation of the projects that had been identified in this particular field. UNDP indicated in reply that the occupying authorities had given permission for action to begin on some of the projects in the West Bank and Gaza which had been approved by the UNDP Governing Council, including one related to training in the field of housing, and that these authorities had further specifically requested that UNDP itself should be the sole executing agency for the projects.
3. A major activity in which Habitat was involved was the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 34/113. In an effort to ensure a balanced and expert view, Habitat recruited the services of three expert consultants to prepare the required report. In the comprehensive and analytical report that resulted (A/35/533 and Corr.), the experts addressed themselves to several aspects of the living conditions of the Palestinian people and identified the various factors which determine or influence the quality of life of the Arab population in the Arab towns and villages within the occupied territories.



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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 2026 (LXI) of 4 August 1976, the Economic and Social Council invited the United Nations Development Programme, the specialized agencies and other organizations within the United Nations system to intensify their efforts in identifying the social and economic needs of the Palestinian people. It also requested the agencies and organizations to consult and co-operate with the Palestine Liberation Organization with a view to establishing and implementing concrete projects to ensure the improvement of the social and economic conditions of the Palestinian people.

2. The Council, in its resolution 2100 (LXIII) of 3 August 1977, reiterated its earlier resolution and requested the Secretary-General to submit annual reports to the Council on the matter.

3. The General Assembly, in its resolution 36/70 of 4 December 1981, urged the appropriate agencies, organizations, organs and programmes of the United Nations system to take the necessary steps in consultation and co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, for the full implementation of resolutions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council on assistance to the Palestinian people; and requested the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session, through the Council, on the progress made in the implementation of Assembly resolution 36/70.

4. The present report contains information received from organizations on action taken by them in implementation of the above resolutions. Information received from other organizations at a later date will be issued as an addendum.

## II. INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM ORGANS AND ORGANIZATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

### A. Economic Commission for Western Asia

[Original: English]

5. Pursuant to its resolution 86 (VII) on the major study entitled "The economic and social situation and potential of the Palestinian Arab people", the Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA) signed a contract with TEAM International in April 1981 to complete the study. ECWA has been closely monitoring the work of Team International on the study and has extended assistance to TEAM in certain areas of vital importance. The study is expected to be completed in August 1982. In the first phase of the study a conceptual framework was developed, and review, survey and field-work groups were formed. Linkages between the field work (e.g., preparation of country profiles) and research work were also established. For the purpose of facilitating the various phases of the study, different research centres, including Palestinian research institutes, in ECWA countries were contacted.

6. So far, three major aspects of the study have been completed: (a) the analysis of demographic characteristics of Palestinians in Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the occupied territories; (b) the development of methodology relating to the economy of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and (c) the analysis of the characteristics of Palestinian institutions providing a variety of social and economic services to the Palestinian community in Lebanon. Also, preparations have been made for extensive field work in areas of education, health, business enterprises and the living conditions of Palestinian women and youth, and their participation in the development process in various communities of the Syrian Arab Republic, Lebanon and Kuwait. Alternative interview forms have been designed, in consultation with the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, for the purpose of pre-testing the random sample of Palestinian households. Work is also in progress on the bibliography of Palestine, Palestinians and their socio-economic problems. The bulk of the work relating to the study is expected to be completed by April 1982 and a follow-up report on the study will be submitted to ECWA at its ninth session.

7. The ECWA secretariat has taken a number of steps towards the completion of the project entitled "Census of the Palestinian Arab people" in pursuance of ECWA resolution 28 (III). In the implementation of the resolution, co-operation and consultation with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) continued through the Palestine National Fund and the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. However, since allocations from the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) are becoming exhausted and owing to difficulties in obtaining data from countries of the region through normal channels, ECWA and the PLO gave consideration to a number of alternative arrangements. A final agreement was reached early in 1982, according to which the PLO would implement the project through the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, while ECWA would be called upon to provide technical advisory service. A follow-up report on this project will be submitted to ECWA at its ninth session.

8. In connection with the implementation of General Assembly resolution 35/110 on permanent sovereignty over national resources in the occupied Arab territories, ECWA provided substantive services in respect of the visit of the interregional adviser from the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development of the United Nations Secretariat who visited the ECWA region in August 1981 to seek information related to Palestinian national resources. ECWA also assisted in data collection for this purpose.

9. Furthermore, pursuant to recommendation 13 of the ECWA regional meeting on human settlements, finance and management, which was sponsored by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), ECWA, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Development Programme and the Government of the United Arab Emirates (AL-Ain, United Arab Emirates, 25-29 November 1979) ECWA completed, in March 1981, a study dealing specifically with the social and economic dimensions of housing and human settlements problems in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

## B. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

[Original: English]

10. The activities of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in this regard are essentially undertaken pursuant to resolution 109 (V) of 1 June 1979, adopted at the fifth session of the Conference. By this resolution, the Secretary-General of UNCTAD was requested, within the context of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade, to initiate studies, within the competence of UNCTAD, as regards those people and countries still living under colonial domination or foreign occupation, among which it specified the people of Palestine. The studies were to be undertaken in collaboration with the respective national liberation movements recognized by regional intergovernmental organizations.

11. A report was prepared, with the assistance of consultants, on assistance to the Palestinian people (TD/B/870). The report sought to provide a background review of the economic conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories; to identify the main economic problems facing the Palestinian people, and to formulate suggestions regarding a programme of action designed to overcome the problems in question. The report was submitted to and discussed by the Trade and Development Board at the first part of the twenty-third session, held from 28 September to 12 October 1981. 1/

12. On that occasion, the Trade and Development Board adopted by vote, resolution 239 (XXIII) by which, inter alia, the Secretary-General of UNCTAD was requested within the context of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade, to prepare a comprehensive and in-depth survey of the state of the economy of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories, as well as an elaborate analysis of the potentials for its development in the various sectors, and to formulate proposals for alternative development strategies in collaboration with the Palestine Liberation Organization. The resolution further invited the United Nations Development Programme to make available to UNCTAD additional resources, with a view to achieving the objectives in question.

## C. United Nations Industrial Development Organization

[Original: English]

13. The mandates which, until February 1981, had been given to the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) for the improvement of the condition of the Palestinian people and the efforts undertaken by the organization to that date are described in the report on the subject submitted by the Executive Director to the Industrial Development Board at its fifteenth session in May 1981 (see ID/B/255, paras. 1-9).

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1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 15 (A/36/15), part three, paras. 252-302.

14. The Board, at its fifteenth session, inter alia, took note with appreciation of the participation of Palestinian trainees in group training programmes organized by UNIDO and sought expansion of such activities. The Board urged the UNIDO secretariat to intensify its efforts and take all possible measures to increase technical assistance to the Palestinian people and sought a further progress report from the Executive Director on technical assistance to the Palestinian people including proposals on ways and means of expanding the programme, to be submitted to the Board at its sixteenth session. 2/

#### Participation in group training programmes

15. Palestinian candidates were invited to participate in the UNIDO group training programmes for 1981. As a result, one candidate attended the in-plant group training programme in the field of petrochemical industry held in Romania, from 6 April to 28 May 1981.

16. The list of UNIDO group training programmes for 1982 has been provided to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Palestinian candidates will again be invited to participate in these programmes.

#### Access to the West Bank and Gaza Strip

17. The Secretary-General has been informed by UNIDO that the Government of Israel has not given its concurrence with regard to access to the West Bank and Gaza Strip, to enable UNIDO to implement the remaining six projects approved by the Board, (see ID/B/255, paras. 1 and 5) namely:

- (a) A survey of manufacturing industry in the West Bank and Gaza Strip;
- (b) Feasibility study for a cement plant in the West Bank;
- (c) Feasibility study for a canning plant for citrus fruits;
- (d) Assistance to the plastics industry;
- (e) Assistance to the pharmaceutical industry;
- (f) Assistance to small-scale industries and workshops.

#### New projects

18. As requested by the Board, the UNIDO secretariat is actively involved in identifying new projects which may be implemented to assist the Palestinian people. In this connection, contacts are maintained with the PLO and it is expected that, as a result, some Arab countries may act as host to group training programmes for the benefit of the Palestinian people.

19. UNIDO secured the co-operation of the Polish Central Union of Work Co-operatives in the organization of group training programmes for the Palestinians in Poland. The list of training possibilities prepared by the Polish Central Union of Work Co-operatives is under consideration by the PLO. The first group training programme - dealing with food processing - will be held in Poland in the latter part of 1982. It will last from 8 to 10 weeks and will have 20 participants.

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2/ Ibid., Supplement No. 16 (A/36/16), paras. 310, 312 and 313.

20. Discussions are being held with the Bulgarian and Indian authorities on similar group training programmes which may take place early in 1983.

D. United Nations Environment Programme

[Original: English]

21. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has prepared a draft project proposal entitled "Training course for Environmental Health Officers on Problems of Water Supply, Sanitation and Health for the Palestinian People".

22. The project proposal was sent to UNDP at United Nations Headquarters in July 1981 to be considered for implementation by UNDP, with financial support from UNEP, in the framework of the Special Task Force that has been set up by UNDP to co-ordinate programmes and projects of various United Nations bodies and specialized agencies. UNEP arranged for a World Health Organization (WHO) consultant to visit several Arab countries and draft the curriculum for the Training course. UNDP informed UNEP, however, that the Israeli military authorities have not yet approved implementation of the project.

23. UNEP was also informed by the Permanent Representative of Israel to UNEP that his Government was of the view that the UNEP proposal seemed to duplicate two UNDP-executed projects covering health manpower development and the strengthening of health institutions and suggested that UNEP might wish to consult with UNDP on the matter.

24. UNEP is at present taking action in the light of these comments to redraft the proposal and will send the revised version to UNDP for consideration and action in taking up the proposal with the Israeli authorities.

E. United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)

[Original: English]

25. Following the adoption by the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session of resolution 34/133 of 14 December 1979 on assistance to the Palestinian people, which was similar to General Assembly resolution 36/70, officials of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) met with the Permanent Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization to the Centre in Nairobi to consult with him on the implications of the resolution. Subsequently, the Executive Director wrote to the Palestine Liberation Organization requesting its views and advice on how best the Centre could provide assistance to the Palestinian people in the field of human settlements. Since then, the Centre has been in contact with the Permanent Observer on several occasions regarding this matter. The Permanent Observer has informed the Centre that he conveyed the communication from the Centre to the Headquarters of his organization in Damascus and that he would inform the Centre as soon as a response was received.

26. While waiting for the response of the Palestine Liberation Organization, and without prejudice to any specific future projects, the Centre explored a number of possible activities in connection with assistance to the Palestinian people in the field of human settlements. For example, the Centre plans to organize a course on management and public housing programmes, including sites and services, for countries in the Middle East and North Africa, which could include the participation of suitably qualified Palestinians. The Centre is also consulting with a number of universities and specialized institutes with a view to placement of qualified Palestinians for training in these institutions in selected human settlement fields. Another possibility is the participation, through assistance provided by the Centre, of suitably qualified Palestinian candidates in the various training programmes, workshops and study tours organized by the Centre under its 1982-1983 work programme.

27. At the second regular session of 1981 of the Economic and Social Council, during the deliberations of the agenda item entitled "International co-operation in the field of human settlements", the observer for the Palestine Liberation Organization requested the Centre "to assist the housing co-operative societies in the occupied territories". As the occupying authorities have requested that the United Nations Development Programme should serve as the sole executing agency for United Nations projects on assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied territories, this request was forwarded by the Centre to the Administrator of UNDP for consideration an possible inclusion in the UNDP programme of assistance to the Palestinian people in the field of human settlements. The Administrator was also informed that should UNDP require any technical assistance, the expertise and experience of the Centre in this field would be at his disposal.

28. The General Assembly may, in this regard, wish to note that the extent to which the Centre could provide direct technical assistance to the Palestinian people within the occupied territories is very much limited by the above-mentioned position of the occupying authorities regarding the execution of United Nations projects on assistance to the Palestinian people within those territories. The Centre, however, has been informed by UNDP that at least one of the human settlements projects, "Training in Housing", which had originally been identified for implementation in the occupied territories, with the assistance of the Centre, is at present being implemented in the area by UNDP. The project concept includes provision for fellowships and training in the West Bank and Gaza to enhance knowledge and expertise in housing and habitat at the university level, and to broaden managerial, planning and operating techniques of municipalities, as well as to develop skills in the areas of housing co-operatives, construction, design, planning and engineering. A second project, "Housing Fund", has also been approved by the UNDP Governing Council and will be implemented upon approval by the Government of Israel. The project would provide expert services for advice on establishing a fund for long-term assistance to housing activities in the West Bank and Gaza.

F. United Nations Children's Fund

[Original: English]

29. During the past year the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has provided assistance to Palestinian mothers and children in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the West Bank and Gaza as part of programmes approved by the UNICEF Executive Board at its 1980 session.

Jordan

30. The UNICEF Executive Board in 1980 approved a commitment from general resources of \$420,000 covering the fields of health, non-formal education and family welfare services.

31. The health programme for mothers and children in camps is being implemented through UNRWA. During 1981 UNICEF assistance enabled UNRWA to extend its immunization campaigns; approximately 20,000 children were vaccinated against communicable diseases. Upgrading of preventive health care services enabled the health centres run by UNRWA to reach a greater number of mothers and children. UNICEF provided resources for the training of 120 health workers in various refugee camps. Instructional material and audio-visual aids were produced to support the health education campaign in refugee camps.

32. In the field of non-formal education, the upgrading of rehabilitation centres in Al-Baqaa and Al-Jofeh refugee camps provided facilities for more women to receive training in income-generating skills.

33. Under the family welfare programme new day-care centres and kindergartens were established in Al-Baqaa, Wahdat and Muzha refugee camps and 41 kindergarten workers and supervisors were trained.

34. During 1981 \$65,700 were expended on the programmes.

Lebanon

35. In 1980 the UNICEF Executive Board approved a commitment of \$675,000 from general resources. The programme is aimed at upgrading and developing health, education, and social welfare services. The preventive health measures for women and children in camps are being implemented through UNRWA.

36. With UNICEF support two new maternal and child health centres have been established and 10 existing centres improved. These centres now serve as focal points for camp health committees, environmental sanitation, health and literacy education, home visiting and vaccination campaigns. The immunization campaign, serving approximately 25,000 children and pregnant women, was continued during 1981, resulting in a reduction in the number of diphtheria cases and an estimated drop in children's communicable diseases. A new nursing school in Saida has been

provided with basic equipment and transport, and support has continued for nursing schools at Tyre and Beirut. Two maternity and children's hospitals at Beirut have been provided with basic equipment and transport. Training has been provided to various categories of health workers and volunteers.

37. In the field of non-formal education, UNICEF provided support for the establishment of a new pre-vocational training programme and the improvement of four others. Assistance was also provided to enable 23 trainees to receive intensive training in basic life skills. Equipment was also given to a producers' co-operative centre, which serves as a prototype for possible replication in other camp areas.

38. Social welfare services were strengthened through the establishment of a new kindergarten in South Lebanon, with continuing support to nine existing kindergartens. Assistance was provided for the training of 48 kindergarten teachers.

39. During 1981 \$166,200 were expended on programmes for Palestinian mothers and children in Lebanon.

#### Syrian Arab Republic

40. In 1980 the UNICEF Executive Board approved a commitment of \$255,000 from general resources for a programme covering health, non-formal education and social welfare.

41. Under the health programme, assistance was provided in 1981 to UNRWA enabling 25,000 children to be vaccinated through UNRWA health centres against communicable diseases.

42. Assistance was provided during the year to a vocational training institute for girls, enabling 100 girls to receive skill training for income-generating activities.

43. Improvements were made in two residential care institutions, serving 100 children, and facilities in kindergartens were upgraded in Homs, Lattakia, Khan Dannon, and Khan el-Sheikh, thereby improving day-care services for 600 children in refugee camps.

44. During 1981 UNICEF expended \$31,100 on these activities.

#### West Bank and Gaza

45. The UNICEF Executive Board at its 1980 session approved a commitment of \$495,000 from general resources for assistance aimed at improving health, education and social welfare services for Palestinian mothers and children in the West Bank and Gaza.

46. In addition to support for the training of kindergarten teachers, furniture and equipment was provided in 1981 for 76 kindergartens in the West Bank and Gaza



together with musical instruments and other supplies for the El Alaiya School in the West Bank which provides academic and vocational training for blind children.

47. During 1981 UNICEF expended \$219,100 on the programme.

G. United Nations Development Programme

[Original: English]

48. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has continued to finance regional activities which have benefitted the Palestinian people either directly or indirectly. For instance, the Institute of Education at Amman, which was jointly created by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), has continued to receive assistance from UNDP. In order to bring this project to a more advanced level, a formulation phase for innovative approaches in education was processed and approved in 1981. The total cost of the project to UNDP has reached \$2.9 million.

49. A second example of indirect benefit for Palestinian trainees and scholars is represented by the Regional Institute for Training and Research in Statistics at Baghdad and the Arab Planning Institute in Kuwait. Both of these Institutes, which continue to receive UNDP assistance, provide training and research facilities for Palestinian students and scholars. The total cost of the projects by the end of 1981 had amounted to \$2.3 million.

50. During the period under review UNDP continued to give special emphasis to the implementation of Governing Council decision 79/18 concerning assistance to the Palestinian people. As will be recalled, the decision was adopted as a result of various resolutions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council on the subject. The Governing Council decision authorized the Administrator to draw up to \$3.5 million from the UNDP Programme Reserve for the design and implementation of 18 projects, 17 of which were to be carried out in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and one in the Syrian Arab Republic.

51. The Administrator also continued to supervise personally all aspects of project planning and implementation through the work of a Senior Adviser who has held extensive consultations regarding project implementation with Governments directly concerned and with representatives of the Palestinian people. For each project in the West Bank and Gaza Strip under implementation, the UNDP Office for Projects Execution has obtained the services of highly qualified international consultants, approved by all parties concerned, to advise on project design and work plans, and each project plan has required the personal approval of the Administrator prior to implementation. In the light of experience gained in actual project operations, the Governing Council, at its twenty-eighth session, in June 1981, authorized the Administrator to increase, where necessary, the notional amount of expenditures for individual projects, keeping within the over-all allocation of \$3.5 million (Governing Council decision 81/13).

52. By the end of 1981, 11 of the 17 projects approved by the Governing Council located in the West Bank and Gaza Strip were under implementation by UNDP or prepared for implementation and some had largely been completed. Implementation of one project ("Strengthening and Development of the Moussa Alami Project"), however, has not begun pending determination by UNDP on how assistance might most effectively be utilized. Consultations regarding the remaining five projects located in the West Bank and Gaza Strip are still continuing. Project formulation carried out by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations had also begun for the project located in the Syrian Arab Republic.

53. It is expected that, if all projects currently under implementation or prepared for implementation are carried out, the \$3.5 million Programme Reserve allocation will be exhausted. No funds, other than those made available by the Governing Council from the Programme Reserve, have as yet been contributed for the implementation of projects. Proposals regarding the feasibility of continuing activity by UNDP in this area will be presented by the Administrator to the Governing Council at its twenty-ninth session in June 1982.

#### H. World Food Programme

[Original: English]

54. The Secretary-General has been informed that since no request for assistance to Palestinian people was submitted to the World Food Programme in 1981, the Programme has nothing to report for this particular period.

#### I. United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

[Original: English]

55. Since May 1950, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has been providing education, health and relief services according to eligibility for Palestine refugees <sup>3/</sup> and their descendants registered for assistance, who numbered 1,902,843 at 31 December 1981.

56. Although there has been no census of Palestinians, the registered refugees are believed to be more than half the total Palestinian population living in Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, Jordan and the occupied territories of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, which constitute the Agency's area of operations. Consequently,

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<sup>3/</sup> Palestine refugees (by UNRWA definition for operations purposes) are persons whose normal residence was Palestine for a minimum of two years preceding the Arab-Israeli conflict in 1948 and who, as a result of this conflict, lost both their homes and their means of livelihood. To be eligible for UNRWA assistance, refugees (and their direct descendants) must be (a) registered with UNRWA; (b) living in the area of UNRWA operations; and (c) in need.

UNRWA is a major provider of education, health and welfare services to the Palestinian people. These services have evolved over the years in direct response to the needs of the refugees and the Agency's financial ability to meet them. By the end of 1981, about \$2.0 billion had been expended by UNRWA on assistance to Palestine refugees. The education services were operated in co-operation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the health services in co-operation with the World Health Organization (WHO).

57. The regular programmes are fully described in the annual reports of the Commissioner-General of UNRWA. An account of the programme in 1981 is contained in the report covering the period from 1 July 1980 to 30 June 1981. 4/ In brief, in the 1980/81 school year, over 321,000 children received elementary and preparatory (lower secondary) education in 635 UNRWA schools; 8,901 pupils were assisted with their secondary education at local government or private schools; 5/ some 4,900 trainees followed vocational or teacher-training courses at eight UNRWA centres; 365 students were awarded scholarships for university study; modest programmes of pre-school, youth and women's activities and adult craft-training were conducted; and professional in-service training was provided for medical and education personnel. Medical services were available to about 1.6 million refugees and supplementary feeding for such vulnerable groups as young children, pregnant women and nursing mothers. In the camps, UNRWA provided environmental sanitation and assistance with repairs to housing of families in special need. Rations of flour, rice, sugar and oil were distributed to about 824,000 refugees; 6/ and special hardship assistance was given to the most needy families. The total cost of financing the services in 1981 was \$180.7 million. The programmes were carried out by 16,722 employees, mostly teachers, all but a handful of whom are themselves Palestine refugees, under the direction of 106 international staff. 7/

58. The prime determinant of the Agency's ability to meet the needs of the refugees is the level of its financial resources. Given the funds, there are many projects which the Agency would implement to enhance the opportunities for refugees to become self-supporting, to improve the quality of services and to cater for the

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4/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/36/13).

5/ In Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic; elsewhere, all refugee pupils, enrolled in government secondary schools receive their education free of charge.

6/ The basic ration provided the equivalent of about 800 calories per recipient per day.

7/ The total number of approved international staff posts is 121, of which 21 (including one post reimburseable by the Japanese Government) are loaned by UNESCO to provide technical guidance to the education programme, 5 by WHO to provide technical guidance to the health programme, 88 financed from the United Nations budget and 7 financed by UNRWA itself.

special needs of those with particular handicaps. Unfortunately, as the Agency has pointed out repeatedly over the years, income is insufficient to maintain even the minimum services at the established levels. In 1981, the Agency's income fell short by \$48.6 million of the budget of \$238.7 million. A related problem is that the level of income is not known sufficiently far in advance to permit smooth planning.

59. Nevertheless, within those constraints, a limited number of improvements were possible, of a nature to enhance the efficiency with which services met refugees' needs or to enrich an existing programme. The information given below, though not exhaustive, illustrates the work carried out by UNRWA.

60. In 1981, expenditure on the education programme increased by 4 per cent over 1980, from \$100.1 million to \$104.5 million, accounting for 57.8 per cent of total expenditure. The major item of additional outlay was on the school education programme, which expands each year to cater for the growing school population. In 1980/81, the new intake included over 7,000 pupils more than in 1979/80 and some 200 additional teachers were appointed. Most UNRWA school buildings are operated on a double-shift basis to cope with the numbers of pupils. Some of the buildings urgently require replacement. During 1981 \$0.75 million were allocated to construct 40 additional class-rooms and specialist units to avoid triple-shifting. Three significant developments which began in 1980 in the education programme continued to be implemented successfully in the 1980/81 school year. The first was the production of a consolidated biennial work plan for the school years 1980/81-1981/82. The second was the implementation of organizational changes in the fields and headquarters education offices, which included the strengthening of the professional aspects of the UNRWA education system by setting up Education Development Units in Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic and an Education Development Centre in the West Bank. The third was the Agency's take-over from the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) of the pre-school centres in the Gaza Strip, previously run for UNRWA by AFSC. In the vocational training programme, a contribution from the OPEC Fund continued and enabled UNRWA to enlarge four vocational training centres and provide a wider range of courses.

61. Health services accounted for \$31.4 million or 17.4 per cent of total expenditure, an increase of 1.6 per cent over 1980. The quality of the medical and dental services provided at the health centres is under continuing review. Specialist clinics treat tuberculosis, diabetes, cardiovascular disorders, dermatological and rheumatic complaints and eye diseases. An additional number of small clinical laboratories attached to health units were equipped to perform bio-chemical tests previously referred to central laboratories. Special attention was focused on the level of nutrition among infants and young children and their mothers. In response to the high prevalence of diarrhoeal diseases among small children, particularly in summer time, the Agency has, since March 1979, participated in the Gaza Strip in the development of a WHO-assisted project for the implementation of early oral rehydration therapy. In camp sanitation, because of financial difficulties the Agency participated to a limited extent only in self-help projects carried out by the refugees to construct drains and pathways in camps throughout the area of operations, to connect sewage systems to local networks, and to continue the provision of private water connections and latrines

to those families still without them. The schemes were undertaken with the co-operation of the local municipal and governmental authorities and, in Lebanon, the Palestine Liberation Organization.

62. The third category of service, the relief programme, involved expenditure in 1981 of \$36.4 million, compared with \$44.1 million in 1980, accounting for 20.1 per cent of the total expenditure. The assistance provided by the relief programme comprises essentially a basic ration of food commodities received as contributions in kind, with very limited shelter and welfare assistance. The latter is concentrated on the sector of the refugee population which is the most needy: widows, orphans, the aged, the physically and mentally handicapped etc. This category of refugees, known as "special hardship cases", has been provided with extra rations in Jordan, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip since 1978. In 1981 the programme began to be extended to Lebanon. By the end of 1981, some 39,000 persons were benefiting from extra rations.

63. Again in 1981, Agency operations in Lebanon suffered extensively from local disturbances and Israeli military operations in southern Lebanon, which caused considerable damage to refugee shelters as well as some Agency installations.

#### J. International Labour Organisation

[Original: English]

64. After consultations with the Palestine Liberation Organization, a nominee was awarded a fellowship to attend the Training Methodology course at the International Centre for Advanced Technical and Vocational Training at Turin, from 2 to 27 February 1981. A fellowship was awarded to the Dean of the Polytechnic Institute of Hebron who attended the Management of Vocational Training Institutions course, from 26 April to 4 July 1981, and two other fellowships were awarded to senior faculty members of the Polytechnic who both attended the On-the-Job Training Methods and Management course, from 20 September to 12 December 1981, at the Turin Centre. Equipment, in the form of teaching aids worth about \$10,000, is at present being sent to Turin from the suppliers and it will shortly be shipped to the Polytechnic Institute.

65. As in the preceding three years, the Director-General of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) assigned a mission in March 1981, consisting of three ILO officials, to go to Israel and the occupied Arab territories to examine on the spot the situation of the Arab workers. The mission's working documents included all information which had earlier been supplied, at the Director-General's request, by the Governments of Egypt, Israel, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic, the Arab Labour Organisation and the Palestine Liberation Organization. The mission, which visited several parts of Israel and the occupied Arab territories, held meetings with, inter alia, the municipal authorities, including the Mayors of Bethlehem, Nablus and Gaza, with trade union leaders from the West Bank, and with Israeli and Arab officials of the labour and other administrative services. The mission collected information on the economic and social situation in the occupied Arab territories on the promotion of equal opportunity and treatment in working

conditions of Arab workers, including wages and social benefits, on the access to training facilities by Arab workers and, in particular, on the freedom to establish trade unions and the effective exercise of trade union rights.

66. In this report, which was published as an appendix to the report of the Director-General submitted to the International Labour Conference at its sixty-seventh session in 1981, the mission endeavoured to describe the salient features of the situation of workers living in a state of continuing occupation, as far as the matter is within the competence of the ILO, and to make recommendations for improving it.

67. The ILO collaborated in 1979 with UNDP and other specialized agencies in the identification of projects for providing assistance to the Palestinian people. Several projects falling within the fields of competence of the ILO were selected for implementation, and it is hoped that ILO experts, in their individual capacity as advisers, will be assigned to UNDP projects in the West Bank and Gaza areas. Finally, arrangements are being made between UNDP and the International Centre for Advanced Technical and Vocational Training (Turin), to implement a technical co-operation project, in the occupied Arab territories, in the field of vocational training for technicians in the building sector.

#### K. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

[Original: English]

68. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) participated, early in 1979, in an inter-agency task force to identify projects for the benefit of the Palestinian people. As a result, in June of that year the UNDP Governing Council approved 18 projects which had been identified for a total UNDP contribution of \$3.5 million. Of these projects, four are in agriculture and involved FAO in their identification. The projects are (a) Specialized Training Programmes in Agricultural Development (fellowships and study tours costing \$200,000); (b) Strengthening and Development of Moussa Alami Farm (feasibility study of development potential costing \$6,000); (c) Consultants for the Establishment of a Faculty of Agriculture in the West Bank or Gaza (\$50,000); and (d) Agricultural Training Centres for Palestinian Farmers (\$200,000).

69. FAO is currently involved only in the execution of the last-mentioned project (PAL/79/010). FAO participated in the pre-formulation mission for this project in December 1981. In January 1982, FAO fielded a consultant to prepare the project document. It is envisaged that project activities will begin in March 1982 for a duration of two years. Costs are now estimated at around \$250,000.

70. Under the Technical Co-operation Programme, a new project for the compilation and tabulation of agricultural data in the West Bank and Gaza areas was approved in February 1981 in the amount of \$30,000. Another project, for specialized training in agricultural development (approved in 1978), received an additional allocation of \$67,500 in 1981 and was split into two sub-projects in order to provide for necessary additional language training. A third project, designed to provide

assistance in agricultural planning, was approved in 1981 in the amount of \$21,000. This will be implemented shortly.

71. The Palestine Liberation Organization, in its capacity as representative of the Palestinian people, was invited to attend the following meetings: fifteenth FAO Regional Conference for the Near East (Rome, 21-25 April 1981); FAO/UNDP Workshop on the Improved Utilization of Feed Resources for Sheep Fattening in the Near East (Amman, Jordan, 25-29 April 1981); Workshop on Strengthening Agricultural Marketing Training in the Near East and North Africa (Rome, 1-5 June 1981); seventy-ninth session of the Council (Rome, 22 June-2 July 1981); seventh session of the Near East Plant Protection Commission (Rome, 31 August-4 September 1981); twelfth session of the Commission for Controlling the Desert Locust in the Near East (Rome, 7-11 September 1981); twenty-first session of the FAO Conference (Rome, 7-25 November 1981).

#### L. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

[Original: English]

72. The following information is intended to complete and update the information provided in the report of the Secretary-General on assistance to the Palestinian people, submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session (A/36/305, dated 9 June 1981).

73. General Assembly resolution 36/70 of 4 December 1981 is to be brought to the attention of the Executive Board of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) at its one hundred and fourteenth session (5-28 May 1982).

#### Co-operation with UNDP

74. UNESCO took note of General Assembly resolution 36/70, in paragraph 4 of which, the Assembly requested UNDP to undertake direct execution of the projects in the occupied Palestinian territories, including Jerusalem, in co-ordination with the relevant local Palestinian organization and bodies; and took note also of the report of the Co-ordinator concerning the status and prospects of the programme at the end of 1981.

75. UNESCO further took note of paragraph 5 of the above-mentioned resolution requesting that UNDP assistance to Palestinian people in the Arab host countries should be rendered through the specialized agencies and expresses once again its readiness to co-operate fully with UNDP in the implementation of any projects within its field of competence.

#### Assistance through UNRWA

76. As foreseen in the approved programme and budget for 1981-1983 the agreement between UNESCO and UNRWA has been extended to enable UNESCO to continue to assume technical responsibilities for the education programme for Palestine refugees. For

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this programme 20 professional posts, including that of the director, are provided, as well as educational supplies and equipment.

Assistance to Palestinians under the regular programme, including the participation programme and special accounts for fellowships

77. Twenty fellowships have so far been granted under the regular programme, 1981-1983, and nine under the participation programme. At the request of the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO) assistance was granted to the General Union of the Palestine Writers and Journalists for the reprinting of Palestine writers' works. Furthermore a choice of poems from the poet Mahmoud Darwich is being translated and will be edited in the UNESCO collection of representative works.

Higher education for Palestinians

78. UNESCO has extended its co-operation to the Secretary-General to study ways and means of establishing at Jerusalem a University of Arts and Science to cater for the needs of Palestine refugees in the area, under the aegis of the United Nations. A senior United Nations official who has been requested to gather data relevant to the study, visited UNESCO to hold consultations with the Assistant Director-General for Education. The UNESCO feasibility study on the Palestine university and relevant documents concerning the preservation of Jerusalem and educational and cultural institutions in the occupied Arab territories were put at its disposal. UNESCO will continue its co-operation with the Secretary-General for the preparation, if necessary, of a feasibility study for establishing the university.

79. UNESCO is also continuing efforts, as requested in resolution 1/06, adopted by the UNESCO General Conference at its twenty-first session, to carry out the project of the Palestine Open University and is in contact with the parties concerned with this project.

Educational and cultural institutions in the occupied Arab territories and the protection of cultural property in Jerusalem

80. In pursuance of resolution 14.1, adopted by the General Conference at its twenty-first session, in which the Director-General was invited to keep a permanent watch on Israel's implementation of the resolutions and decisions of the General Conference and the Executive Board relating to educational and cultural institutions in the occupied Arab territories, including Jerusalem, and to send for this purpose such missions as he may deem appropriate, the Director-General is submitting a report on the action taken by him to the Executive Board at its one hundred and fourteenth session.

81. In pursuance of decision 5.5.1, adopted by the Executive Board at its one hundred and thirteenth session, in which the Director-General was invited "to undertake a study of the situation of all the cultural property located in Jerusalem and of the dangers to which it is exposed", the Director-General is also submitting a report on the action taken by him.



International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People

82. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 32/40 B of 2 December 1977, the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People was observed at the headquarters of UNESCO on 9 December 1981. The group of representatives of the Arab States to UNESCO organized the ceremony in which a representative of the Director-General, the Secretary-General of ALECSO, the Chairmen of the Group of 77 and the Group of Non-Aligned Countries, those of different regional groups as well as the doyen of the Arab Diplomatic Corps in France and the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization participated.

83. Poems from the poet Mahmoud Darwich were recited by him in Arabic, and a translation into French was read during the ceremony.

M. International Civil Aviation Organization

[Original: English]

84. As indicated in previous contributions, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is willing to co-operate, within its mandate, with ECWA and UNDP on the implementation of the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council on assistance to the Palestinian people. In accordance with resolution A22-6 of the Assembly of ICAO, the Palestine Liberation Organization is entitled to participate as an observer in the sessions and the work of the Assembly and other international conferences convened under the auspices of ICAO and in the regional meetings dealing with its territories.

N. World Health Organization

[Original: English]

85. During the past year, the World Health Organization (WHO) has continued its assistance to the Palestinian people in conformity with the relevant General Assembly and Economic and Social Council resolutions.

86. Assistance has been provided directly to the populations in the West Bank and Gaza in a number of different ways.

87. In the field of maternal and child health a consultant visited the West Bank in January and April 1981 to study data collected in the malnutrition clinics in order to identify risk factors predicting malnutrition in children, which could be applied in health practice subsequently. In order to extend similar studies, such as the identification of risk factors in women, especially during pregnancy and childbirth, it is proposed that a visit of a WHO staff member take place very shortly. WHO has also provided assistance for the design of nutrition surveys of hardship cases in refugees. In some communities tetanus neonatorum is quite common and a control programme is being supported with the provision of 185,000 doses of tetanus toxoid as well as jet injectors, 100,000 disposable syringes and a

financial grant. A longitudinal study on breast feeding, which has been carried out in Gaza, is being assisted in its analysis in order to bring out the interrelations between this practice and the health and growth of children. A medical officer from Gaza has been awarded a fellowship for six months to study the management and treatment of prematures and neonates.

88. Continued assistance is extended to the diarrhoeal disease control programme which was initiated some time ago. A mixer for local production of oral rehydration salts (with financial support every year) has been provided. Studies on effects of mass oral rehydration therapy on mortality due to diarrhoea have also been supported. The preliminary results show a reduction in hospital admission of diarrhoea cases by 35 per cent and in mortality due to diarrhoea by 49 per cent. In order to give further impetus to this programme, special short training programmes on oral rehydration have been organized in two batches for 10 medical officers from two hospitals in Gaza.

89. Collaboration is continuing in these territories with the Expanded Programme of Immunization and a high level technical mission visited the area in April 1981 to review the progress of the polio control programme. Several measures have been recommended aiming at a further reduction in polio comparable to the levels existing in developed countries. To ensure smooth implementation of the programmes in these areas, the WHO has continued to provide several vaccines. These include 125,000 doses of measles vaccine in 1981 as well as a financial contribution for polio vaccine and for BCG.

90. Following recommendations made by a WHO staff member who visited the territories in previous years, training of staff in different areas of the field of mental health (psychiatry, social community psychiatry, psychiatric nursing etc.) is being continued. During 1981, three candidates from the West Bank and one from Gaza were awarded short- or long-term fellowships for training in the above areas. The placement of four more candidates is in process.

91. In order to appraise the situation with regard to oral health in the territories, two staff members from WHO have just initiated an extended study, with a view to evolving appropriate programmes of control and prevention.

92. Technical advice has been extended to a programme of leishmaniasis control in Jericho and it is proposed to provide consultant services shortly in this respect.

93. In addition to the specific WHO-supported projects referred to above, technical backing has also been extended to inter-agency missions visiting the areas, in particular to the UNDP mission in health manpower development and strengthening of health institutes.

94. The Special Committee of Experts appointed to study the health conditions of the inhabitants of the occupied territories carried out a further mission in April 1981. The Committee made a number of recommendations which could be implemented with WHO assistance, such as epidemiological studies of viral hepatitis, leishmaniasis and other major communicable diseases, a study of morbidity from mental disorders through the establishment by WHO of a pilot

research zone and the provision of more fellowships. As indicated above, some of these recommendations have already been initiated and others are under consideration.

95. As in the past, WHO has provided direct assistance to the Palestine Liberation Organization in the form of grants for payment of salary differentials for health staff employed by the Palestinian Red Crescent Society as well as for supplies and equipment. In addition, special emergency financial aid was provided for medical supplies to help affected Palestinians in Lebanon as a result of the air raids during 1981.

96. WHO collaborates closely with UNRWA and has continued to second a number of staff members to the UNRWA health services.

#### O. World Bank

[Original: English]

97. The World Bank's Articles of Agreement require that loans be made to, or be guaranteed by member Governments. As indicated in previous communications on this subject, World Bank lending has been directed increasingly to the needs of the poorest member countries, focusing, in particular, on the most disadvantaged population groups; hence, improvement in the economic well-being of the Palestinian people is a matter of obvious concern to the Bank. However, it is important to point out that because projects supported by the Bank or the International Development Association entail substantial financial commitments on the part of the borrowing Governments, and can only be undertaken at their request, decisions concerning the benefits to particular population groups from such projects must be made in the first instance by the Governments themselves.

98. Some of the projects which the Bank has helped to finance in member countries in which Palestinian people reside have in fact benefited Palestinians, although the extent of these benefits would be difficult to quantify. For example, living conditions have been improved in urban areas, including areas in which Palestinian people are concentrated. The Bank Group is ready, in consultation with and at the request of member Governments concerned, to help prepare and finance development projects which meet the usual Bank Group criteria, and which would particularly benefit the Palestinian people.

#### P. Universal Postal Union

[Original: French]

99. As in 1979 and 1980, Universal Postal Union (UPU) assistance in 1981, concerned training activities for two members of the Palestinian people. Thus, the two scholarships granted in 1979 by the UPU Executive Council were extended in 1981, and the value was increased in order to enable two Palestinians to receive long-term training (1979-1983) at the Arab Higher Postal Institute (AHPI), Damascus.

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100. In addition, UPU participated in the Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, for which a ceremony was held on 30 November 1981 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva.

101. UPU remains prepared to undertake the execution of the project for training five other members of the Palestinian people whenever financial resources are released for that purpose (see E/1979/61).

Q. International Telecommunication Union

[Original: English]

102. The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) enjoys observer status at conferences and meetings of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and has participated in the work of ITU when matters of concern to the Palestinian people were on the agenda of those meetings.

103. The following comments on recent technical co-operation activities of ITU in which Palestinian nationals have participated may be noted:

(a) As a technical specialized agency, ITU does not at present have any regular budget for technical assistance projects; therefore any project concerning the issue in question has to be financed through UNDP technical assistance programmes or trust funds;

(b) ITU keeps in continuous contact with PLO representatives at Geneva, in order to discuss their needs in the telecommunication field and also to invite them to participate in training seminars held within the framework of the MEDARABTEL project (Middle East and Mediterranean Telecommunication network project);

(c) Under the above training programme, two Palestinian engineers were invited to participate in the Traffic Engineering Seminar held in Turkey in 1980; another two attended the Tariffs Seminar which took place in Malta in 1981. They were also invited to participate in the Regional Maintenance Seminar held at Khartoum in March 1982. To facilitate their participation, fellowships have been provided in each case under UNDP financing;

(d) ITU has also contributed towards the training of Palestinian engineers at different training centres in the Arab region through projects executed by ITU under UNDP financing or trust funds from Arab administrations interested in this question. Many Palestinians act as instructors in several of the Arab Telecommunication Training Centres.

R. World Intellectual Property Organization

[Original: English]

104. The Director-General of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) has drawn the attention of the governing bodies of WIPO, at their sessions in November 1981, to Economic and Social Council resolutions 2026 (LXI) of 4 August 1976 and 2100 (LXIII) of 3 August 1977, entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people".

105. Under the 1981 WIPO Training Programme, two fellowships were awarded, one in the field of industrial property and the other in the field of copyright, to fellows selected from a group of four candidatures submitted by UNRWA.

106. An invitation to propose candidates for the 1982 WIPO Training Programme in the fields of copyright and industrial property was sent to the Permanent Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization at Geneva and to the Commissioner-General of UNRWA and the Secretary of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

107. The Director-General of WIPO was represented at the meeting held at the Palais des Nations at Geneva on 30 November 1981, to commemorate the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

108. It should be recalled that the International Bureau of WIPO has informed the Permanent Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization that it remains at his disposal for further discussions concerning the establishment and implementation of concrete projects to ensure the improvement of the social and economic conditions of the Palestinian people, and that it looks forward to continued co-operation with the PLO.

109. The International Bureau of WIPO has kept the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Western Asia informed of its activities for the benefit of the Palestinian people and welcomes any suggestions concerning co-ordination of efforts, as mentioned in paragraph 1 of Economic and Social Council resolution 2100 (LXIII).

S. International Fund for Agricultural Development

[Original: English]

110. Under this Agreement, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) is restricted by its mandate to financing agricultural development projects in its developing member States. Projects and programmes are approved by the Executive Board of IFAD in response to requests of developing member States.

111. Consequently, IFAD, as a specialized agency of the United Nations, has noted with due interest and concern General Assembly resolution 36/70 which, inter alia, is addressed to relevant agencies of the United Nations system.

/...

T. International Atomic Energy Agency

[Original: English]

112. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has taken note of General Assembly resolution 36/70, in particular paragraph 2 thereof containing recommendations to the relevant agencies, organizations, organs and programmes of the United Nations system.

113. With regard to the information requested from IAEA for the preparation of the report, IAEA has informed the Secretary-General that, owing to the highly technical and specialized nature of IAEA and its programmes which are all related only to the peaceful uses of atomic energy, the kind of help that IAEA could give would not be relevant to the primary needs of the Palestinian people.

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### REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

#### Assistance to the Palestinian people

#### Report of the Secretary-General

#### Addendum

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#### INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM ORGANS AND ORGANIZATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

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\* A/37/50/Rev.1.

INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM ORGANS AND ORGANIZATIONS OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) 1/

1. At its fourth session, the Commission on Human Settlements, in its resolution 4/3 of 6 May 1981, entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian People", requested the Executive Director, *inter alia*, to continue his efforts, within the responsibility and competence of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), to implement the General Assembly resolutions concerning assistance to the Palestinian people, and in particular resolution 34/133.
2. Following the adoption of this resolution, officials of the Centre met with the Permanent Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) at Nairobi in order to consult with him on the implications of the resolution. Subsequently, the Executive Director wrote to the Palestine Liberation Organization requesting its views and advice on how the Centre could best provide assistance to the Palestinian people in the field of human settlements. Since that time, the Centre has contacted the Permanent Observer on several occasions regarding the matter. The Permanent Observer informed the Centre that he had conveyed its communication to the headquarters of his organization at Baghdad and that he would communicate with the Centre as soon as a response was received.
3. Pending the response of the Palestine Liberation Organization, and without prejudice to any specific future projects, a number of possibilities are being explored by the Centre with regard to the provision of assistance to the Palestinian people in the field of human settlements. For example, the Centre plans to organize a course on management and public housing programmes, including sites-and-services schemes, for countries in the Middle East and North Africa. This course will include the provision of fellowships for suitably qualified Palestinians. The Centre is also consulting with a number of universities and specialized institutes with a view to their offering fellowships to qualified Palestinians for training in selected human settlements fields. Another possibility being explored is the participation, with the assistance of the Centre, of qualified Palestinian candidates in the various training programmes, workshops and study tours to be organized by the Centre under its 1982-1983 work programme.
4. At the second regular session of 1981 of the Economic and Social Council, during the Council's deliberations on agenda item 9, entitled "International co-operation in the field of human settlements", the observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization called upon the Centre "to find ways and means of assisting the housing co-operative societies in the occupied territories" (see E/1981/C.1/SR.8, para. 49). As the Israeli authorities have formally requested that the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) should serve as the sole

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1/ Additional information (see A/37/214, sect. II.E.



executing agency for United Nations projects involving the provision of assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied territories, this request was forwarded by the Centre to the Administrator of UNDP for consideration and possible inclusion in the UNDP programme of assistance to the Palestinian people in the field of human settlements. The Administrator was also informed that, should UNDP require any technical assistance, the Centre's expertise and experience in this field would be at its disposal.

5. It may be noted in this regard that the extent to which the Centre can provide direct technical assistance to the Palestinian people is limited by the above-mentioned position of the Israeli authorities regarding the execution of United Nations projects. The projects which had originally been identified with the assistance of the Centre include the project entitled "Training in housing", for which approval for its implementation by UNDP had been received from the Israeli authorities. A second project, entitled "Housing fund", was approved by the Governing Council of UNDP, but approval for its implementation has still not been received from the Israeli authorities. Two other projects, entitled "Housing survey in the West Bank and Gaza" and "Construction machinery and equipment for municipalities and co-operatives", were also identified but were not submitted to the Governing Council of UNDP because of the over-all financial limitations of the UNDP programme of assistance to the Palestinian people.

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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION  
ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE  
TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND  
PEOPLES BY THE SPECIALIZED  
AGENCIES AND THE INTERNATIONAL  
INSTITUTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH  
THE UNITED NATIONS

Assistance to the Palestinian people

Report of the Secretary-General

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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolutions 2026 (LXI) of 4 August 1976 and 2100 (LXIII) of 3 August 1977, called upon the United Nations Development Programme, the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system to intensify their efforts, in close co-ordination with the Economic Commission for Western Asia, in identifying the social and economic needs of the Palestinian people. The above resolutions also urged those agencies and organizations to consult and co-operate with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in establishing and implementing concrete projects for the purpose of improvement of social and economic conditions of the Palestinian people.
2. The Economic and Social Council, in resolution 1983/43 of 25 July 1983, expressed its gratitude to the Governments and United Nations bodies which provided humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, in particular the Palestinian victims of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, and reiterated the appeal to the relevant programmes, organizations, agencies and organs of the United Nations system to sustain and intensify their efforts in this area.
3. The General Assembly, in resolutions 36/70 of 4 December 1981, 37/134 of 17 December 1982 and 38/145 of 19 December 1983, urged the appropriate agencies and organizations of the United Nations system to intensify their efforts, in co-operation with the PLO, to provide necessary economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people.
4. The resolutions of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report annually to the Assembly through the Council on the actions taken by the agencies and organizations concerned in the direction of implementing those resolutions.
5. The present report contains the information received from agencies and organizations of the United Nations system concerning their economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people requested in the above resolutions. Information received from other organizations at a later date will be issued as an addendum to the present report.

## II. INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM ORGANS AND ORGANIZATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

### A. United Nations

#### 1. Economic Commission for Western Asia

6. Pursuant to the Commission's resolution 27 (III) of 14 May 1976, a broad outline had been approved for a comprehensive study of the economic and social situation and potential of the Arab Palestinian people in the region of Western Asia. In accordance with that outline, which was contained in the Secretariat report submitted to the Commission at its third session (E/ECWA/32/Add.1), the

Commission recruited a consultant in April 1981 to complete the project by August 1982. A report on progress made towards the implementation of the project was submitted to the Commission in May 1982 (E/ECWA/140, 28 January 1982), and a final report on the study was presented to the Western Asian Regional Preparatory Meeting for the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held from 25 to 29 April 1983 in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates.

7. In its resolution 123 (X) of 11 May 1983 on the study of the economic and social situation and potential of the Palestinian Arab people, adopted at its tenth session, the Commission noted the submission by its Executive Secretary concerning the study (E/ECWA/166/Add.1) under consideration. In accordance with paragraph 1 (b) of that resolution, a sub-committee was established, composed of the representatives of Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and the Palestine Liberation Organization for the submission of adequate information on the situation of the Palestinian people to the International Conference on the Question of Palestine. The Sub-Committee produced the report that was later submitted to the Conference. As a follow-up to the implementation of Commission resolution 123 (X), the Executive Secretary presented a report to the Commission at its eleventh session, held in April 1984, under agenda item 6 (b).

8. In the context of its programme of work and priorities for 1983, the Commission carried out different activities related to the situation of Palestinians. In particular, every five years it produces a comprehensive population data sheet containing demographic changes in the countries of the region, and a summary data on this aspect is produced every other year. The summary for 1983 will include for the first time information on demographic characteristics of Palestinians. The data sheet is based on the demographic information contained in the statistical abstract of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (Syrian Arab Republic) and other sources covering demographic aspects of the Palestinians.

9. During the period from 9 to 13 October 1983, the Commission held in Baghdad a Regional Preparatory Meeting devoted to the International Youth Year: Participation, Development, Peace. The focus of the meeting's deliberations was concentrated on the situation and needs of Western Asian youth, including the Palestinian youth.

10. Under its regular activities on the promotion of national food strategies and food security programme, the Commission is carrying out a study on food security issues in the occupied land which deals with the development of food production and consumption in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip since the Israeli occupation. It makes recommendations on the ways and means of promoting food production and raising nutritional standards under prevailing conditions. The study is being carried out in collaboration with the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development.

11. For the preparation of the Secretary-General's report on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in occupied territories, requested by the General Assembly in resolution 37/222 of 20 December 1982, a consultant from the United

Nations Centre for Human Settlements visited the Commission in February 1983 for the purpose of meeting with officials and collecting appropriate information. During his four-day visit, he was assisted in compiling available data on the situation of Palestinians in the occupied territories.

## 2. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

12. The activities of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in this regard have thus far been undertaken pursuant to resolution 109 (V), adopted at the fifth session of the Conference on 1 June 1979, and the follow-up resolution 239 (XXIII) of 9 October 1981, adopted by the Trade and Development Board at the first part of its twenty-third session, held from 28 September to 12 October 1981.

13. As was reported to the Economic and Social Council at its second regular session of 1983, pursuant to Trade and Development Board resolution 239 (XXIII) and in compliance with paragraph 3 thereof, the UNCTAD secretariat approached UNDP to seek additional resources for financing the preparation, within the context of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade, of a comprehensive survey on the state of the economy of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories, as well as an elaborate analysis of the potential for its development in various sectors, and to formulate proposals for alternative strategies in collaboration with the PIO.

14. While it has not yet been found possible to secure additional resources for conducting an in-depth survey of the economy in the occupied territories, as a first step, a report, entitled "Palestine: options for development" (TD/E/960), was prepared in 1983 by consultants at the request of the secretariat and submitted to the Trade and Development Board at its twenty-seventh session. That report contains a broad evaluation of the potential for and constraints on the economic and social development of the Palestinian peoples, while providing a framework and direction for the in-depth sectoral studies that would need to be made in preparing the comprehensive survey. During the preparation of that report, consultations were held with representatives of the PIO.

15. In 1983, the UNCTAD secretariat held consultations with the secretariat of UNIDO which, in compliance with its mandate, was preparing a comprehensive study on the industrial sector of the Palestinian economy. The results of that study are expected to make an important contribution to the proposed survey.

16. The UNCTAD secretariat submitted to the Conference at its sixth session, held in Belgrade from 6 June to 2 July 1983, a report entitled "UNCTAD assistance to national liberation movements recognized by regional intergovernmental organizations" (TD/282), which contained a review of the activities of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in the field of assistance to the Palestinian people. On that occasion, the Conference adopted resolution 146 (VI) of 2 July 1983, in paragraph 1 of which the Conference requested the Secretary-General of UNCTAD to set up a special economic unit to monitor and investigate the policies of the Israeli occupying authorities hampering the

economic development of the occupied Palestinian territories and, in paragraph 2, requested him to report periodically to the Trade and Development Board and the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress achieved in the implementation of the resolution, including the work done by the economic unit referred to in paragraph 1. Pursuant to that resolution, provision was made for such a special economic unit in the UNCTAD component of the programme budget of the United Nations for 1984/85, submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session. The provision has now been approved by the Assembly and steps are being taken by the UNCTAD secretariat to set up such a unit.

### 3. United Nations Industrial Development Organization

17. Pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolutions 2026 (LXI) of 4 August 1976 and 2100 (LXIII) of 3 August 1977, and upon the request of the Permanent Observer of the Palestinian Liberation Organization to UNIDO, the Industrial Development Board, at its twelfth session in 1978 and at its fourteenth session in 1980, approved the following technical assistance project proposals:

- (a) Survey of the manufacturing industry in the West Bank and Gaza Strip;
- (b) Training in industrial development;
- (c) Feasibility study for a cement plant in the West Bank;
- (d) Feasibility study on a canning plant for citrus fruits;
- (e) Assistance to the plastics industry;
- (f) Assistance to the pharmaceutical industry;
- (g) Assistance to small-scale industries and workshops.

18. The Board, at its seventeenth session, urged the UNIDO secretariat to assist in reactivating industrial production capacities in occupied territories and in establishing new capacities for the Palestinian people. The Board also urged the UNIDO secretariat to sustain and intensify its efforts in providing required technical assistance to the Palestinian people in co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization.

#### (a) Implementation of approved projects

##### Project 1. Survey of manufacturing industry in the West Bank and Gaza Strip

19. The project was approved by UNIDO with a financial allocation of \$US 56,000 from the United Nations Industrial Development Fund (UNIDF) and, with a recent project revision, the allocation was raised to \$US 72,000. The survey, which is part of a comprehensive and in-depth survey of the state of the economy of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories to be prepared by

UNCTAD, is being completed and has been submitted to the PLO and to UNCTAD accordingly. The UNIDO Survey may reveal new requirements of the Palestinian people for technical assistance in the industrial sector.

Project 2. Training in industrial development

20. From the list of UNIDO group training programmes, a number of programmes of specific interest to Palestinian candidates were identified. UNIDO is awaiting responses to the invitations issued to qualified Palestinian candidates to participate in these training programmes. The following three UNIDF-financed group training projects, which were specifically designed for Palestinian candidates, were postponed to 1984 at the request of the PLO:

(a) Group training programme on industrial project identification, preparation, evaluation, financing and contracting, Vienna (Austria) (UF/PLO/83/060);

Number of participants: 15. Project cost: \$US 99,493;

(b) In-plant group training programme in the field of industrial co-operatives, Poland (UF/PLO/82/062);

Number of participants: 15. Project cost: \$US 88,800;

(c) Programme for orientation and techniques of small-scale industry development, Hyderabad (India) (UC/PLO/83/005);

Number of participants: 15. Project cost: \$US 64,270.

Project 3: Assistance to small-scale industries and workshops

21. The UNIDO project formulation mission, which was scheduled to visit Beirut and Damascus in 1983, was postponed until 1984 at the request of the PLO. A large-scale project proposal will be prepared after the visit of the UNIDO mission.

Project 4. Assistance to the plastics industry

22. A project document was prepared and approved by UNIDO, financed by the United Nations Industrial Development Fund (UNIDF), to cover a consultation mission to identify the problems of the plastics industry and to make recommendations with particular emphasis on capacity utilization. Potential consultants are under consideration for recruitment. The project will be operational in 1984.

Project 5. Assistance to the pharmaceutical industry

23. An UNIDF-financed project document was approved by UNIDO. Two nominated consultants are under recruitment. The project operations will start in 1984.



Project 6. Feasibility study for a cement plant in the West Bank

Project 7. Feasibility study for a canning plant for citrus fruits

24. As requested by the Office of the Permanent Observer of the PLO to UNIDO, it was agreed to keep these projects pending until a way can be found for their execution.

(b) Participation of UNIDO in the International Conference on the Question of Palestine

25. UNIDO actively participated in ad hoc inter-agency meetings, five regional preparatory meetings on the International Conference on the Question of Palestine and the Conference itself.

4. United Nations Centre for human Settlements (Habitat)

26. Pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1983/43 and General Assembly resolution 38/145 on assistance to the Palestinian people, and upon the request of the PLO, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements has approved the provision of nine middle-level training fellowships to qualified Palestinians to be trained in various specialized areas of human settlements. The fellowships are for the biennium 1984-1985 for courses in suitable specialized institutes for durations of up to six months. This offer of nine training fellowships has already been communicated to the PLO.

5. United Nations Development Programme

27. In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1983/43 and General Assembly resolution 38/145, UNDP has set up a special Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People to help improve their social and economic conditions. The programme is centred in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, except for one project which is located in the Syrian Arab Republic. The Administrator is personally and directly responsible for that programme. Emphasis is placed on appointing highly qualified and impartial international consultants for project preparation and review. UNDP also retains full control of all project inputs throughout the life of the project, including delivery of supplies and equipment to project sites, and no intermediaries are used for transfers of funds required for project expenditures. Major reliance is placed on the use of logistical services offered by United Nations peace-keeping organizations in the area, as well as by UNRWA, with resulting benefits in terms of reliable deliveries and sharply reduced overhead costs. An amount of \$US 7.5 million has so far been allocated from UNDP Special Programme Resources and, by the end of 1983, those funds had been either expended for completed projects, committed for projects under way or allocated for approved projects which will become operational during 1984.

28. Six of the 14 projects approved for implementation have already been successfully completed. Five projects are presently still under implementation and three more projects will commence operations in 1984.

29. The available funds having been entirely committed with this list of projects UNDP is presently seeking voluntary contributions in order to implement a wide range of pipeline projects, which are presently under review with the representatives of the Palestinian people and the concerned authorities. The future programme covers project concepts in a variety of sectors. In the agricultural sector, it includes such projects as assistance to farmers, citrus processing in Gaza, agricultural laboratory in Gaza, plums and grapes processing factory in the West Bank, assistance to the Gaza Hydrology Department, development of olive groves and olive oil production, assistance to the Gaza fishermen. The projects in the pipeline also cover sanitation and water supply in rural villages and a large sewage disposal scheme at Khan Yunis and Rafah in the Gaza Strip.

30. The future programme also envisages assistance in the field of health through provision of equipment, operational requirements of the UNDP-sponsored Medical Services Training Centre at Bethlehem and mobile clinics for rural villages.

31. In the educational sector, the programme involves building additional classrooms in rural villages and providing teachers' training for higher education and assistance to primary and secondary education in Gaza. In addition, UNDP's future programme of assistance also foresees building and repair of rural roads, training of specialists in glass and ceramics engineering technology and assistance to women's institutions.

32. Over the past four years, an excellent record of programme delivery has been maintained, and there are excellent prospects for the future. The viability of the UNDP Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian people, however, is entirely dependent on the provision of additional funds in the form of voluntary contributions from Governments and intergovernmental institutions, in response to appeals of the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme and the General Assembly.

#### 6. World Food Programme

33. The World Food Programme (WFP), in accordance with its regulations, responds to requests received, both for development and emergency assistance, from Governments, including those from the PLO, to be implemented with the agreement of the Governments of host countries. During 1983, no request for economic or social assistance was received on behalf of the Palestinian people, and thus none was provided. Nor was any emergency assistance given in co-operation with the PLO.

34. During the year, however, about 4,000 Palestinian refugees in the Syrian Arab Republic were provided with a WFP ration, under the terms of WFP project "Syria 1337", which foresees the feeding of refugees and returnees from Lebanon following the military invasion of that country in June 1982. The other Palestinian refugees involved in this particular exodus are being cared for by UNRWA. The total cost to WFP for this assistance was about \$122,650.

7. United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine  
Refugees in the Near East

35. Since May 1950, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has been providing education, health and relief services to Palestine refugees. At 31 December 1983, 1,991,957 refugees were registered with UNRWA. Although there has been no census of Palestinians, the registered refugees are believed to be more than half of all of the Palestinian people. Consequently, UNRWA is a major provider of education, health and welfare services to the Palestinian people. Those services have evolved over the years in direct response to the needs of the refugees and the Agency's financial ability to meet them. By the end of 1983, about \$2.4 billion had been expended by UNRWA on assistance to Palestine refugees. The education services were operated in co-operation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), while the health services were operated in co-operation with the World Health Organization (WHO).

36. Since June 1982, following the Israeli invasion, UNRWA has been involved in emergency operations in Lebanon. Under a \$62 million emergency relief programme between June 1982 and December 1983, some 185,000 Palestine refugees (including 7,000 refugees who took refuge in the Syrian Arab Republic and 7,200 refugees who were not registered with UNRWA) were given food and medical care. More than 11,000 families have received cash grants and/or building materials for their immediate housing needs. The first phase of the reconstruction programme, for which UNRWA appealed for \$13 million, was launched in June 1983 to rebuild destroyed Agency schools, clinics and offices; to reconstruct refugee camp roads and drains; and to provide additional cash grants to 3,200 destitute families to repair or rebuild their homes. At the end of 1983, a total of \$5.4 million had been pledged against this appeal, which permitted work to begin on projects in the Saida area and the disbursements of housing grants. The inter-factional PLO fighting in the Tripoli area in north Lebanon in November and December 1983 seriously affected some 35,000 Palestine refugees. The efforts of UNRWA to meet immediate relief needs began on 7 November 1983. By the end of the year, two distributions of foodstuffs had been carried out and the Agency had issued other necessities, such as blankets, mattresses and family kitchen kits. The work of replacing or repairing destroyed or damaged Agency premises and refugee houses in Lebanon was in progress throughout 1983. At the end of the year, most UNRWA installations were operating normally again.

37. The regular programmes are fully described in the annual reports of the Commissioner-General of UNRWA, most recently in the report covering the period from 1 July 1982 to 30 June 1983. 1/ In brief, in the 1982/1983 school year, 336,207 children received elementary and preparatory (lower secondary) education in 651 UNRWA schools and 7,559 pupils were assisted with their secondary education at local government or private schools; 2/ some 5,258 trainees followed vocational or teacher-training courses at eight UNRWA centres; 349 students were awarded scholarships for university study; modest programmes of pre-school, youth and women's activities and adult craft training were conducted; and professional in-service training was provided for medical and educational personnel. Medical

services were available to about 1.7 million refugees and supplementary feeding for such vulnerable groups as young children, pregnant women and nursing mothers. In the camps, UNRWA provided environmental sanitation and assistance with repairs to housing of families in special need. Special assistance, including basic food items, was given to the most needy families. The cost of financing the regular programmes in 1983 was \$195.5 million. The programmes were conducted by 16,897 employees, mostly teachers, all but a handful of whom were themselves Palestine refugees, under the direction of 116 3/ international staff.

38. The prime determinant of the Agency's ability to meet the needs of the refugees is the level of its financial resources. Given the funds, there are many projects which the Agency would implement to enhance the opportunities for refugees to become self-supporting, to improve the quality of services and to cater for the special needs of those with particular handicaps. Unfortunately, as the Agency has pointed out repeatedly over the years, income is insufficient to maintain even the minimum services at the established levels. In 1983, the Agency's income fell short by \$33.0 million of the budget of \$207.5 million. A related problem is that the level of income is not known sufficiently far in advance to permit smooth planning.

39. The shortfall in cash income has repeatedly threatened the Agency's education programme, which accounted for 60 per cent of expenditure in 1983. The General Assembly of the United Nations decided in March 1982 that Governments which were giving contributions in the form of commodities should be asked to convert them into cash or allow UNRWA to sell them for cash. The following autumn, responses to this decision prompted the Agency to phase out the general distribution of basic rations, which no longer had the priority they once had. Education and health services are more important to the Palestinian refugees of today, except in emergency situations such as that in Lebanon, where emergency food rations have been distributed regularly since June 1982. UNRWA continues, however, to attach value to its special programmes for feeding nutritionally vulnerable groups - mothers and small children, poverty-stricken families and the disabled - and trainees on residential courses at the Agency's vocational and teacher training centres.

40. Nevertheless, within the financial constraints, a limited number of improvements were possible, of a nature to enhance the efficiency with which services met refugees' needs or to enrich an existing programme. The information given below is illustrative though not exhaustive.

41. In 1983, expenditures on the education programme increased by 14 per cent over 1982, from \$110.5 million to \$125.5 million. The major additional outlay was on the school programme. Most UNRWA school buildings are operated on a double-shift basis to cope with the numbers of pupils. Some of the buildings urgently require replacement. During 1983, \$3.3 million were allocated for the construction of 108 class and administrative rooms and 21 specialized units to replace some of the most unsatisfactory rented school premises. In addition, \$501,000 were provided to construct 28 classrooms to avoid triple shifting and a further \$3 million were made available to construct some 80 badly needed specialist rooms at existing schools.

42. Health services accounted for \$40.0 million or 19 per cent of total expenditure compared with \$33.9 million in 1982. Plans for improvements to the medical and dental services are gradually being implemented. More emphasis is being laid on the preventive aspects of oral health, especially among school children, and additional dental clinics have been established. Specialist clinics treat tuberculosis, diabetes, cardiovascular disorders, dermatological and rheumatic complaints and eye diseases. An additional number of small clinical laboratories attached to health units were equipped to perform bio-chemical tests previously referred to central laboratories. Special attention is given to the level of nutrition among infants and young children and their mothers. In response to the high prevalence of diarrhoeal diseases among small children, particularly in summer time, the Agency operates 55 nutrition rehabilitation clinics.

43. Elsewhere in its area of operations the Agency has been able to participate to a limited extent in self-help camp sanitation projects carried out by the refugees to construct drains and pathways in camps to connect sewage systems to local networks, and to continue the provision of private water connections and latrines to those families still without them. The schemes have been undertaken with the co-operation of the local municipal and governmental authorities.

44. The third category of service, the relief programme, involved expenditure in 1983 of \$19.4 million, compared with \$31.3 million in 1982, amounting to 9 per cent of total expenditure. (The reduction is largely accounted for by the phasing-out of the basic ration programme - see para. 39 above.) The assistance provided by the relief programme is mainly concentrated on the most needy among the refugee population: widows, orphans, the aged, the physically and mentally handicapped etc. This category of refugees, known as "special hardship cases", has been provided with dry-food commodities, blankets, clothing, footwear, assistance in the repair of their shelters, preferential entry to UNRWA's training centres and assistance in becoming wholly or partially self-supporting by means of income-generating projects. The number of persons registered as special hardship cases at the end of 1983 was 90,142. For the benefit of all eligible registered refugees, UNRWA also provides a welfare counselling service and adult craft training courses, organizes women's and youth activities centres and arranges for the education and training of the disabled.

## B. Specialized agencies

### 1. International Labour Organisation

45. A new report on the situation of workers in the occupied Arab territories was submitted by the Director-General of the International Labour Office to the sixty-ninth session of the International Labour Conference (June 1983). 4/ The report was prepared on the basis of missions to Jordan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Egypt, on the one hand, to hold consultations with governmental, employers' and workers' circles of those countries and with the Palestinian bodies located in them, and, on the other hand, to Israel and the occupied territories in order to examine at first hand view the situation of the Arab workers in question. The report made a number of recommendations with a view to improving the situation as

regards, inter alia, employment, vocational training, working conditions, social security, and the exercise of trade union rights, and as regards the implications of the establishment of Israeli settlements for the situation of the workers.

46. In a special section, the report also reviewed ongoing or planned projects for technical assistance to the populations of the occupied territories. The Office had participated at the planning stage in two projects which had been selected for implementation by UNDP: the promotion of vocational and technical education in the West Bank and in Gaza and specific training in industrial management. According to information provided by UNDP, the first of those projects is being implemented and proposals regarding the activities to be undertaken have been accepted by all the parties concerned. As regards the project for training in industrial management, the concept has been approved for implementation in the near future by the parties and a detailed plan of activities to be carried out at the ILO International Centre for Advanced Technical and Vocational Training at Turin is now being drawn up.

47. Furthermore, an expert of the Office participated actively in the preparation of a project designed to promote the vocational training opportunities offered by Palestinian women's institutions and community development centres. The following needs were identified as objectives to be pursued by this project: technical assistance for the development and marketing of handicraft products, the evaluation of the social service needs of the community development centres, the granting of fellowships in the field of administration, social work, community development, vocational training, the promotion of basic education programmes and the acquisition of income-producing skills. The Office indicated its willingness to collaborate with UNDP in elaborating project documents concerning the provision of suitable assistance to Palestinian women in its spheres of competence, such as the promotion of long-term vocational training facilities at more advanced levels (technical school for girls in the West Bank), the promotion of vocational training courses in income-producing skills (at the elementary and intermediate levels), the reinforcement and expansion of the educational activities of the best organized and most effective women's organizations and support of handicraft production activities experiencing difficulties or threatened with disappearance.

48. The Office is prepared to give favourable consideration to other possibilities for increasing its contribution to the UNDP programme of assistance to the Palestinian people, with account being taken of the principle of the direct implementation by UNDP of technical assistance projects in the occupied territories set forth in resolution 36/70 of the United Nations General Assembly. The report notes that four other projects in the field of labour, which had been temporarily postponed owing to lack of resources, could be rapidly implemented if the financing became available to UNDP. The fields covered by these projects are: assistance to production workshops in setting up an apprenticeship system, the development of co-operatives in the West Bank and Gaza, assistance to trade union organizations and a study of a social security system for the occupied territories.

49. As was pointed out in the previous report, the Director-General decided to make an additional allocation from the ILO regular budget in order to finance, during the biennium 1982-1983, technical assistance projects for the population of the occupied territories. The particular difficulties resulting from the situation

of occupation, which have been compounded by the events in Lebanon, have adversely affected the implementation of the programme and the anticipated completion dates. The Director-General has made proposals to the Israeli authorities concerning the dispatch of an expert to study facilities and vocational training needs in the occupied territories and to discuss proposals for a technical assistance programme.

50. Furthermore, steps have been taken with a view to offering to the administrative and teaching staff of higher educational institutions in the West Bank, some of whom have already benefited from a recent programme of fellowships at the ILO Centre at Turin, further fellowships enabling them to take courses within the framework of the regular training programmes at the Turin Centre. It is hoped that the recipients of the fellowships will be chosen in the near future. The Office is also envisaging the possibility of granting aid to Palestinian employers by making available fellowships and providing other forms of technical assistance, such as the development of small and medium-sized undertakings and the further training of professional staff.

51. ILO has noted that, in its resolution 38/145, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to convene in 1984 a meeting of the relevant programmes and agencies of the United Nations system to develop a co-ordinated programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people and to ensure its implementation, in accordance with the request made by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine. ILO is willing to contribute to this meeting in so far as its spheres of competence are concerned.

## 2. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

52. During the period under review, FAO assistance to the Palestinian people continued to be in the area of training.

### (a) Specialized training in agricultural development

53. This is a project of the FAO Technical Co-operation Programme with a budget of \$US 84,000. It provides for the award of three fellowships for university graduates over a 23-month period. The objective is to provide the required means for improving and updating the technical skill of three university graduates in animal husbandry, soil science and plant protection through intensive training programmes. The fellowship in soil science was completed in September 1983. Nominations for the other two fellowships are expected. This follows a similar project which provided three fellowships in botany, food technology and agricultural engineering.

### (b) Agricultural training centre

54. FAO is the executing agency of this project, which has a budget of \$US 356,000 provided from the UNDP Programme Reserve. Its objective is to assist the Palestinian families of Gilline and Ramadan refugee camps in the Syrian Arab Republic to improve the production and efficiency of crop and livestock farmers and

producers by providing facilities, knowledge, skills, material inputs and technical leadership for demonstration and training work.

(c) Participation in meetings

55. Since 1 January 1983, the Palestine Liberation Organization has been invited to attend the following meetings:

(a) Seventh Session of the FAO Regional Commission on Land and Water Use in the Near East (Rome, 16-18 March 1983);

(b) Thirteenth Session of the Commission for Controlling the Desert Locust in the Near East (Cairo, 10-14 April 1983);

(c) Ninth Session of the Near East Forestry Commission (Nicosia, 6-10 June 1983);

(d) Twenty-second session of the FAO Conference (Rome, 5-24 November 1983);

(e) Seventeenth FAO Regional Conference for the Near East (Aden, 11-15 March 1984);

(f) Fourteenth session of the Commission for Controlling the Desert Locust in the Near East (Rome, 7 and 8 June 1984).

56. The organization was represented at the following meetings organized by the United Nations:

(a) The West Asian Regional Preparatory Meeting for the International Conference on the Question of Palestine (Sharjah, United Arab Emirates, 25-29 April 1983);

(b) The Eighth United Nations Seminar on the Question of Palestine (Jakarta, 9-13 May 1983);

(c) The International Conference on the Question of Palestine (Geneva, 29 August to 7 September 1983).

3. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

(a) Mandate of UNESCO

57. As a specialized agency of the United Nations system, UNESCO contributes through its activities to the implementation of the various resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly on assistance to the Palestinian people and, more specifically, to Palestine refugees. At its seventeenth session held in 1972, the General Conference adopted as one of its general resolutions a resolution entitled "UNESCO's contribution to peace and its tasks with respect to the elimination of colonialism and racism" (17 C, resolution 10.1) in which it:



"Draws once again the attention of the Executive Board and of the Director-General to the need to strengthen UNESCO's action in the fields of its competence as regards the assistance to be given in co-operation with the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) to refugees from colonial and occupied territories and to other peoples striving to liberate themselves from colonial domination, occupation and all forms of apartheid;

"Requests the Secretary-General to assemble information by all available means at his disposal on the national education and the cultural life of the populations in the occupied Arab territories and to report to the General Conference at its eighteenth session".

By a resolution on the preservation and development of sites and monuments (21 C, resolution 3.422) adopted at the same session (1972), the General Conference:

"Invites the Director-General to continue his efforts to establish the effective presence of UNESCO in the City of Jerusalem and thus make possible the actual implementation of the resolutions adopted by the General Conference and the Executive Board for that purpose".

Furthermore, at its eighteenth session held in 1974, the General Conference again adopted as one of its general resolutions a resolution entitled "Access by the populations of the occupied Arab territories to national education and culture" (18 C, resolution 13.1) in which it:

"Invites the Director-General to exercise full supervision of the operation of educational and cultural institutions in the occupied Arab territories, and to co-operate with the Arab States concerned and with the Palestine Liberation Organization with a view to providing the populations in the occupied Arab territories with every means of enjoying their rights to education and culture so as to preserve their national identity".

58. In the Approved Programme and Budget for 1981-1983 adopted by the General Conference at its twenty-first session (1981), UNESCO's mandate with regard to assistance to the Palestinian people is reiterated by the general and specific resolutions adopted at that session:

(a) General resolution on the education programme (21 C, resolution 1/01)

"The General Conference,

...

Authorizes the Director-General to put into effect activities contributing to the achievement of the following objectives:

...

'Development of activities to aid refugees and national liberation movements in the fields of UNESCO's competence', by continuing to develop and intensify, within the fields of UNESCO's competence, activities to aid African national liberation movements recognized by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) recognized by the League of Arab States;

by taking all necessary measures to ensure effective implementation of the General Conference resolutions and Executive Board decisions concerning educational and cultural institutions in the occupied Arab territories;

by co-operating with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in the education programme for Palestine refugees in the Near East, as well as with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other United Nations bodies and regional intergovernmental institutions which render educational services to refugees and national liberation movements and organizations".

(b) Resolution on "UNESCO's contribution to peace" (21 C, resolution 10.1)

"The General Conference,

...

Recognizes the importance of UNESCO's assistance and support to the national liberation movements recognized by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) as well as to the Palestine Liberation Organization, which is recognized by the League of Arab States, and calls for this support to be continued by allowing the representatives of these national liberation movements to participate in all activities of UNESCO, and in particular in the preparation of the Draft Programme and Budget for activities which are of special importance to them".

(c) Resolution on "Educational and cultural institutions in the occupied Arab territories" (21 C, resolution 14.1)

"The General Conference,

...

Invites the Director-General to keep a permanent watch on Israel's implementation of the resolutions and decisions of the General Conference and the Executive Board relating to educational and cultural institutions in the occupied Arab territories, including Jerusalem, and to send for this purpose such missions as he may deem appropriate".

(d) Resolution on "Education for refugees" (21 C, resolution 1.04)

"The General Conference,

/...

Recalling the terms of resolutions 10.1, 14.1 and 1/1.4/1 adopted at its twentieth session, concerning respectively: UNESCO's contribution to peace and its tasks with respect to the promotion of human rights and the elimination of colonialism and racialism; educational and cultural institutions in the occupied Arab territories; and the financing of the education programme for Palestine refugees in the Near East, jointly operated by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) and UNESCO ...

Invites Member States to increase their contribution:

(a) to the financing of the education programme for Palestine refugees in the Near East jointly operated by UNRWA and UNESCO;

(b) to the Funds-in-Trust administered by UNESCO for the financing of education programmes operated in co-operation with the Organization of African Unity and the League of Arab States for refugees and peoples fighting for their independence and against apartheid and all forms of colonialism, racialism, oppression or foreign domination".

(e) Resolution on the "Palestinian Open University" (21 C, resolution 1.06)

"The General Conference,

...

Requests the Director-General to continue his efforts to carry out this project and in so doing to use all the resources placed at his disposal and to make the necessary contacts with the parties concerned by this project".

(f) General resolution on the programme for culture and communication (21 C, resolution 4/01)

"The General Conference,

...

Authorizes the Director-General to implement activities contributing to the achievement of the following objectives:

...

(g) 7.6 'Promotion of the preservation and presentation of the cultural and natural heritage of mankind',

...

by ensuring the presence of UNESCO in Jerusalem with a view to the preservation of the city and the site".

(g) Resolution on the preservation of cultural property in Jerusalem (31 C, resolution 4.14)

"The General Conference,

...

Invites the Executive Board to review developments in the situation regarding Jerusalem and to take any measures that it might consider appropriate, in conformity with the prerogatives conferred upon it by the Constitution;

Invites the Director-General to keep a constant watch on the execution of the resolutions and decisions of the General Conference and Executive Board concerning Jerusalem".

(b) Activities undertaken by UNESCO for the benefit of the Palestinian people

59. In connection with objective 1.4 "Aid to refugees and national liberation movements" of the Approved Programme and Budget for 1981-1983, action has been taken to respond in areas within UNESCO's sphere of competence, to the needs of the PLO recognized by the League of Arab States.

60. UNESCO has undertaken a number of activities in the area of assistance to the formal and non-formal education of refugees and candidates presented by the PLO.

61. UNESCO continues to co-operate with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). Under the agreement signed between UNESCO and UNRWA in 1966 and renewed for the period 1981-1983, UNESCO assumes technical responsibility and UNRWA assumes administrative responsibility for the education programme for Palestine refugees. UNESCO continues to second 20 specialists to the UNRWA/UNESCO Education Department to plan and supervise the operation of schools and technical and vocational training centres situated in Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, Jordan, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. This assistance is aimed in particular at improving the design of the education programme for Palestine refugees and at implementing it more effectively.

62. Steps have been taken to ensure the effective implementation of resolution 14.1 on educational and cultural institutions in the occupied Arab territories, adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO at its twenty-first session to help the population of these territories exercise their rights to education and culture. The Director-General also sent a mission to the occupied Arab territories from 21 March to 6 April 1982 to find out which educational needs of the population of the occupied Arab territories are not being met and to suggest what action might be taken in this regard. 5/ The mission also made recommendations to the Director-General concerning various pedagogical, financial and administrative aspects of educational and cultural institutions, with a view to improving the situation of such institutions in the occupied Arab territories. At the hundred

/...

and sixteenth session of the Executive Board, the Director-General reported on the action he had taken to implement resolution 21 C/14.1 and on the findings of the mission that he had sent to the occupied Arab territories. After considering the Director-General's report, the Executive Board adopted decision 5.1.5 in which it:

"Invites the Director-General to pursue his efforts with a view to implementing these resolutions and enabling Unesco - through its permanent presence - to exercise full supervision of the educational and cultural institutions in all the occupied territories, including Jerusalem and the Golan;

"...

"Further invites the Director-General to continue his action to help to improve the financial situation of UNRWA and of its educational programmes;

"Decides to include this matter on the agenda of the twenty-second session of the General Conference with a view to adopting the necessary measures".

63. In the area of specialized training for professional personnel, grants or fellowships have been awarded to candidates put forward by the PLO to enable them to receive specialized training in areas within UNESCO's sphere of competence. A feasibility study has also been carried out in co-operation with the PLO and the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, on the creation of an Open University which:

"(a) ... aims to promote specific educational measures to overcome the obstacles encountered by certain groups in the exercise of their right to education" and

"(b) comprises, inter alia, the following subprogramme:

"Action on behalf of (Palestinian) refugees and national liberation movements."

In the area of programmes of co-operation for development financed by funds-in-trust, UNESCO has continued to co-operate with the PLO in implementing operational education projects by granting fellowships and carrying out of educational activities.

64. In the area of culture, further to General Conference resolutions 21 C/4/01 on the programme for culture and communication and 21 C/4/14 on the preservation of cultural property in Jerusalem, UNESCO has taken action to preserve the city and site of Jerusalem and to ensure UNESCO's presence there. Pursuant to these resolutions, the Director-General instructed his personal representative, Mr. Raymond Lemaire, to visit Jerusalem from 5 to 12 April 1983 in order to prepare an overall report on the state of the monumental heritage of the city of Jerusalem. At the hundred and sixteenth session of the Executive Board, the Director-General reported on the action he had taken to keep a constant watch on

the execution of the resolutions and decisions of the General Conference and Executive Board concerning Jerusalem.

(c) Future action

65. The Second Medium-Term Plan (1984-1989) approved by the General Conference at its fourth extraordinary session in 1982 provides for a number of measures to assist the education of Palestine refugees. The General Conference adopted resolution 4XC/2/02 concerning, inter alia, Programme II.6 Promotion of the right to education of particular groups.

66. In connection with the programme and budget for 1984-1985, which was submitted to the General Conference at its twenty-second session, the General Conference, in the section of its resolution 2.1 concerning Subprogramme II.6.2 "Action on behalf of refugees and national liberation movements",

"In particular, invites the Director-General:

...

(f) under Programme II.6 Promotion of the right to education of particular groups:

...

(ii) to continue co-operation with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), and also with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the other institutions providing educational assistance to refugees and national liberation movements recognized by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), recognized by the League of Arab States, and to strengthen activities aimed at training the professional personnel of these movements".

67. Under the same Subprogramme II.6.2, UNESCO will continue to co-operate with UNRWA in the education programme for Palestine refugees in the near east. UNESCO's educational assistance to the PLO will be strengthened and directed as a matter of priority towards enjoyment of the right to education. It will be aimed at contributing to the development and qualitative improvement of activities undertaken in co-operation with UNRWA as part of the education programme for Palestine refugees in the near east. UNESCO's action will be directed towards improving educational content and methods and adapting them to the needs of Palestinian refugees. Training seminars will be organized to promote pre-school education and adult education for Palestinian refugees.

#### 4. International Civil Aviation Organization

68. As has been indicated in the past, ICAO is willing to co-operate, within its mandate, with ECWA and UNDP in providing assistance to the Palestinian people. In accordance with Assembly resolution A22-6, the PLO is entitled to participate as an observer in the sessions and the work of the ICAO Assembly and other international conferences convened under the auspices of ICAO and in the regional meetings dealing with its territories. The PLO attended as an observer the twenty-fourth session of the ICAO Assembly in 1983 and was invited to the Third Middle East Regional Air Navigation Meeting, held from 27 March to 14 April 1984, and the twenty-fifth (extraordinary) session of the Assembly, held from 24 April to 11 May 1984.

#### 5. World Health Organization

69. In compliance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1983/43 and General Assembly resolution 38/145, the World Health Organization is constantly endeavouring to assist in the improvement of the health services available to the Palestinian people.

70. Close collaboration has been maintained with UNRWA and, in addition to the post of the Director of Health in UNRWA, who is seconded by WHO, the organization has also made available two medical officers, one nurse, one sanitary engineer and a nutritionist. Assistance has been provided through UNRWA in the fields of maternal and child health, diarrhoeal diseases control, immunization and in the development of school health programmes.

71. The organization is continuing to carry out on-the-spot investigations in the area through visits of WHO officers and independent experts. At the time of the events on the West Bank, in the spring of 1983, the Director-General sent a special team to obtain information to prepare a report requested by the United Nations Secretary-General.

72. The Special Committee of Experts carried out a further visit to the occupied territories and noted that a number of its previous recommendations had been followed up. In particular, a WHO consultant had been sent to the area to support a study on diarrhoeal diseases and there had been a considerable strengthening of the Gaza Public Health Laboratory services and the out-patient specialist consultations at the community level. A WHO consultant immunologist visited Gaza and the West Bank to assess the coverage rate of immunization against the six diseases controllable by immunization. In general his findings were favourable, although immunization against measles was slightly low in coverage, and in fact a request has been received for the vaccination of Palestinian women in the West Bank against German measles as a preventive measure against the occurrence of congenital abnormalities in newborn infants, which may occur should an epidemic of the disease break out in these areas.

73. Within the framework of the organization's Expanded Programme on Immunization, a protocol for a sero-epidemiological survey is being developed to be used as a new tool for evaluating coverage for EPI target diseases.

74. In the field of training, WHO has awarded fellowships to several Palestinians in the occupied territories and to seven UNRWA staff in such areas as community health, sanitary engineering, endocrinology and clinical psychology. During 1983, the organization helped to organize a training course for UNRWA dental hygienists and two training courses in clinical management of diarrhoea for UNRWA physicians and nurses. Arrangements are also under way to organize similar courses in early 1984.

75. WHO mobilized \$US 1 million for emergency health assistance to the Palestinian people following the events in Lebanon during the past year. This comprised the provision of medicaments, laboratory equipment and dispensary supplies to the Palestinian people in the areas concerned, and by special agreement was channelled through UNRWA. A further amount of \$US 15,000 was mobilized for the provision of three WHO Emergency Health Kits to meet the needs of the Palestinian population in the Tripoli area. A BRS unit is also on order for the UNRWA health centre in the Beqaa Valley.

76. As in the past, the organization paid an annual grant of \$US 200,000 salary subsidies to medical specialists, health technicians and administrators of the Palestinian Red Crescent Society.

77. In accordance with Health Assembly recommendations requesting a study on the possibility of establishing three health centres in the occupied territories, the Director-General has taken appropriate steps to contact the authorities concerned, which included visits to the area by his representatives. In collaboration with UNDP, it is hoped that the first of those centres will open shortly.

78. Finally, it should be mentioned that WHO participated in both the West Asia Regional Preparatory Meeting for the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, which took place in May 1983, and in the International Conference itself, held at Geneva from 27 August to 3 September 1983.

## 6. World Bank

79. The Articles of Agreement of the World Bank require that loans be extended to, or guaranteed by, Member Governments. In addition, Governments which borrow are responsible for determining the beneficiaries of projects financed by Bank loans. In all its work, the Bank places special emphasis on the alleviation of poverty and on integrating the disadvantaged and poorest segments of populations in the dynamic development process. Uprooted groups and refugees are often in particular need and, as these groups become settled in host countries, many of the services developed with Bank loans become available to them, although it is not possible to quantify such benefits. The Bank Group is ready, at the request of borrowing Governments, to help prepare and finance development projects which meet our usual criteria and which would benefit the Palestinian people.



#### 7. Universal Postal Union

80. As in 1979-1982, Universal Postal Union assistance in 1983 related to training activities for the benefit of two nationals of the Palestinian people. The two fellowships granted by the UPU Executive Council in 1979 were renewed until 1983 to enable two Palestinians to complete their lengthy training (1979-1983) at the Arab Postal Faculty in Damascus.

81. So far as its resources allow, UPU is willing to consider any other specific requests for training fellowships in the postal field for Palestinian students.

#### 8. International Telecommunication Union

82. The Secretary-General has been informed that there have been no new developments in ITU with respect to assistance to the Palestinian people since the last correspondence of the Agency to the Secretary-General in 1982 on this subject.

#### 9. International Maritime Organization

83. In its response to the request of the Secretary-General concerning assistance to the Palestinian people, IMO referred to the information reported to the Economic and Social Council last year (E/1983/72/Add.1 of 15 July 1983), which stated the following:

"1. The Council of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), at its forty-first session, decided, on 27 October 1978, that the national liberation movements recognized, inter alia, by the League of Arab States should be invited as observers to IMO meetings and conferences.

"2. In order to implement this decision, the IMO Assembly, at its eleventh session, amended its rules of procedure on 6 November 1979. Observers from the Palestine Liberation Organization have attended IMO meetings and conferences since that date.

"3. Consultations are currently in progress between IMO and UNRWA in order to determine and to agree on appropriate arrangements for the provision of training facilities for Palestine trainees in the maritime field."

84. The Secretary-General has been informed that the above consultations have not been concluded yet and that he will be informed of any further developments in this regard.

#### 10. World Intellectual Property Organization

85. The Director-General of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) will bring to the attention of the Governing Bodies of WIPO, at their next sessions in September 1985, Economic and Social Council resolution 1983/43 and General Assembly resolution 38/145.

86. Under the 1983 WIPO Training Programme fellowships were awarded in the fields of industrial property and copyright to two candidates selected from a group of 13 candidatures submitted by UNRWA.
87. An invitation to propose candidates for the 1984 WIPO Training Programme in the fields of copyright and industrial property was sent to the Commissioner-General of UNRWA, to the Secretary of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and to the Permanent Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) at Geneva.
88. The Director-General of WIPO was represented at the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held at the United Nations Office at Geneva from 29 August to 7 September 1983. 6/ The Director-General was also represented at the first and second ad hoc inter-agency meetings on the preparation for that Conference (19 to 21 January 1983, and 30 and 31 May 1983), as well as the European Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Conference (4 to 8 July 1983).
89. The Director-General of WIPO was represented at the meeting held at the Palais des Nations at Geneva on 29 November 1983 to commemorate the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian people.
90. The International Bureau of WIPO has informed the Permanent Observer of the PLO that it remains at his disposal for further discussions concerning the establishment and implementation of concrete projects to ensure the improvement of the social and economic conditions of the Palestinian people, and that it looks forward to continued co-operation with the PLO.

#### 11. International Fund for Agricultural Development

91. Article 2 of the Agreement establishing IFAD states that "the objective of the Fund shall be to mobilize additional resources to be made available on concessional terms for agricultural development in developing member States". Furthermore, section 1 (b) of article 7 of the same Agreement lays down, inter alia, that IFAD is to provide financing "only to developing States that are members" of IFAD. On the eligibility of a State to become a member of IFAD, section 1 (a) of article 3 states that "membership of the Fund shall be open to any State Member of the United Nations or any of its specialized agencies, or of the International Atomic Energy Agency". Accordingly, IFAD has not provided any financial assistance to the Palestinian people.

#### Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/38/13).

2/ In Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic; elsewhere, all refugee pupils, totalling 34,992, enrolled in government secondary schools received their education free-of-charge.

Notes (continued)

3/ At the end of December 1983, there were 129 approved international staff posts, of which 13 were vacant. Twenty posts are loaned by UNESCO to provide technical guidance to the education programme, 6 by WHO to provide technical guidance to the health programme, 88 are financed from the United Nations budget and 12 by UNRWA itself. Special non-governmental contributions financed 3 posts on a temporary basis for the emergency programmes of UNRWA in Lebanon, 2 social workers were funded by the Save the Children Fund, Norway, and 1 administrative assistant was funded by the Save the Children Fund, United Kingdom.

4/ International Labour Organisation, Report of the Director-General, International Labour Conference, Sixty-ninth Session (June 1983), appendix 3.

5/ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, document 22 C/18/Corr., para. 31.

6/ For the report of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, see A/CONF.114/42 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.83.I.21).

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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING  
OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL  
COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES BY THE  
SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THE  
INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS  
ASSOCIATED WITH THE UNITED  
NATIONS

Assistance to the Palestinian people

Report of the Secretary-General

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\* A/39/150.

INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM ORGANS AND ORGANIZATIONS  
OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

International Atomic Energy Agency

Although the Agency will be pleased to render technical assistance to the PLO if requested to do so by a Member State or groups of Member States, no concrete examples exist yet. Likewise, the Agency would also be prepared to execute any programme of assistance for the PLO financed by UNDP.

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Assistance to the Palestinian people

Report of the Secretary-General

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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Economic and Social Council, in resolutions 2026 (LXI) of 4 August 1976 and 2100 (LXIII) of 3 August 1977, called upon the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system to intensify their efforts, in close co-ordination with the Economic Commission for Western Asia, in identifying the social and economic needs of the Palestinian people. It also urged those agencies and organizations to consult and co-operate with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in establishing and implementing concrete projects for improving the social and economic conditions of the Palestinian people. In resolution 2100 (LXIII), paragraph 5, the Council also requested the Secretary-General to submit annual reports to the Council on the action taken by the agencies and organizations concerned and the results achieved. In resolutions 1983/43 of 25 July 1983 and 1984/56 of 25 July 1984, the Council expressed its gratitude to the Governments and United Nations bodies that had provided economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, and reiterated its appeal to the competent programmes, organizations, agencies and organs of the United Nations system to sustain and intensify their efforts in this area.

2. The General Assembly, in resolutions 36/70 of 4 December 1981, 37/134 of 17 December 1982 and 38/145 of 19 December 1983, requested UNDP to undertake direct execution of projects approved by the UNDP Governing Council in the occupied territories and urged the appropriate agencies and organizations of the United Nations system to intensify their economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people in co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Governments concerned.

3. The General Assembly, in resolution 38/145, also requested the Secretary-General to convene in 1984 a meeting of the relevant programmes, organizations, agencies and organs of the United Nations system to develop a co-ordinated programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people. Such a meeting was convened on 5 and 6 July 1984 at Geneva, with the participation of the United Nations agencies and organizations concerned, as well as the representatives of PLO, Arab host countries and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. The results of the meeting were considered by the Economic and Social Council at its second regular session of 1984, and by the General Assembly at its thirty-ninth session. In resolution 39/224 of 18 December 1984, the General Assembly took note in paragraph 4, of the report of the Secretary-General concerning the meeting (A/39/474 and Corr.1), which it regarded as "a valuable opportunity to assess progress in economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people and to explore ways and means of enhancing such assistance".

4. In resolution 39/224 the General Assembly also requested the Secretary-General (a) to expedite the finalizing, through existing inter-agency mechanisms, of the co-ordinated programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, (b) to convene in 1985 a meeting of the relevant programmes, organizations, agencies, funds and organs of the United Nations system to consider the co-ordinated programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people,



and (c) to provide for the participation of PLO, the Arab host countries and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations in the meeting. It also requested the relevant organizations of the United Nations system to intensify their efforts, in co-operation with PLO, to provide economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, and further requested that such assistance to the Palestinians in the Arab host countries should be rendered in co-operation with PLO and with the consent of the Arab host Government concerned. Finally, it requested the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fortieth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution.

5. As requested in the resolution, the Secretary-General utilized an existing inter-agency mechanism, the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Programme Matters) (CCSQ (PROG)) of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC), for consultations with the organizations of the United Nations system regarding the development of a co-ordinated programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people. CCSQ (PROG) considered the question in April 1985 and arranged that agencies' future activities should be grouped thematically into three main categories: (a) development activities, (b) education and training, and (c) health, in order to move towards a co-ordinated programme of economic and social assistance. Information on current activities would, as in previous reports, be presented organization by organization.

6. Accordingly, section I of the present report covers the activities currently being carried out by agencies and organizations of the United Nations system. Section II covers future and proposed activities which could provide the basis for a co-ordinated programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people.

7. It should also be mentioned that in addition to the activities covered in the present report, several organizations carry out other activities such as events organized on the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

8. Information received from other organizations at a later stage will be issued as an addendum to the present report.

## II. ACTIVITIES CURRENTLY CARRIED OUT BY THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

### A. United Nations

#### 1. United Nations Development Programme

9. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) activities in the area of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people started in September 1980, following authorization by the Governing Council at its twenty-seventh session, in June 1980. 1/

10. In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1983/43 and General Assembly resolution 38/145, UNDP has set up a special programme of assistance to the Palestinian people to help improve their social and economic conditions. The programme is centred in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, except for one project located in the Syrian Arab Republic. As the only intergovernmental development programme with large-scale, continuing operations in these territories, UNDP bears a unique and important responsibility, on behalf of its member States, particularly since under present conditions these States have very restricted possibilities for undertaking directly other forms of assistance.

11. The Administrator of UNDP is personally and directly responsible for this programme. Emphasis is placed on appointing highly qualified international consultants for project inputs throughout the life of the project, including delivery of supplies and equipment to project sites, and no intermediaries are used for transfers of funds required for project expenditures. The use of logistical services of United Nations operations in the area has been of great benefit resulting in reliable deliveries and sharply reduced overhead costs.

12. By decision 79/18, 2/ the Governing Council allocated \$3.5 million to the programme of assistance to the Palestinian people from the 1977-1981 Programme Reserve. In its decision 82/13, 3/ the Governing Council allocated another \$4 million in the third programming cycle to provide the programme with a total of \$7.5 million in resources, committed for projects under way or allocated for approved projects which will become operational during 1985.

13. As of 1 March 1985, UNDP had 20 projects in the area of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people at various stages of implementation. Eight of these projects have already been successfully completed. They are:

(a) Specialized training in industrial management. The purpose of this project was to upgrade the management skills of 19 owners and managers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip through the facilities of the ILO International Centre for Advanced Technical and Vocational Training at Turin;

(b) Promotion of pre-primary education. In order to improve the quality of instruction and the facilities of kindergartens in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, UNDP financed several refresher courses for over 200 teachers and also provided tables, chairs, cupboards and blackboards, manufactured by local charitable societies, and educational toys and games;

(c) Promotion of technical and vocational training. UNDP organized training facilities for courses on radio and television repairs, air-conditioning/refrigeration and domestic appliances, constructed the classrooms for all courses and provided furniture, fittings and technical equipment;

(d) Specialized training in agricultural development. In an effort to improve levels of both income and technical expertise among the Palestinian farmers, UNDP arranged fellowships in irrigation and water management, plant protection, extension service, planning, administration, range management and forage production, new crops, agricultural machinery, marketing and small ruminant production techniques. In addition, audio-visual and reproduction equipment was

provided to the training sections of the West Bank and Gaza Strip Agriculture Departments;

(e) Training in housing. UNDP organized a training course for Palestinian architects, engineers and city planners to advance the level of abilities of private architects and engineers, as well as professionals attached to municipalities, in the fields of housing, planning, design, construction and financing. The month-long course took place at Bethlehem under the guidance of experts from Canada and was attended by 24 Palestinian specialists;

(f) Children's institutions. Appropriate equipment, instructors, administrative and transport facilities were provided for disadvantaged children at a rehabilitation centre for disabled youth at Gaza. A home for the mentally retarded in the West Bank and two vocational rehabilitation centres for youth in the Gaza Strip, were also provided by UNDP.

14. Under two more projects dealing with development and strengthening of health institutions, UNDP provided medical equipment, books and publications, visual aids and transportation equipment for 12 medical institutions and units in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

15. Five projects relating, in particular, to agricultural training, health manpower development, community services for youth, training in anaesthesiology and construction of a medical centre specialized for training nurses and paramedical technicians, are at present still under implementation.

16. In addition to the projects listed above, UNDP has assisted the development efforts of other organizations and institutions in a variety of ways. As an example, UNDP identified Palestinian candidates and provided administrative services for the course entitled "training for trainers", given by the International Labour Organisation at the International Centre for Advanced Technical and Vocational Training at Turin, Italy.

## 2. United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

17. Since May 1950, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has been providing education, health and relief services to Palestine refugees. As at 31 December 1984, 2,067,216 refugees were registered with UNRWA.

18. Although there has been no census of Palestinians, the registered refugees are believed to be more than half the total of the Palestinian people. Consequently, UNRWA is a major provider of education, health and welfare services to the Palestinian people. These services have evolved over the years in direct response to the needs of the refugees and the Agency's financial ability to meet them. The education services are operated in co-operation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the health services in co-operation with the World Health Organization (WHO).

19. Since June 1982, following the Israeli invasion, UNRWA has been involved in emergency operations in Lebanon. The food aid programme, which benefited some 185,000 refugees in Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic, was discontinued in March 1984 except for the destitute who continue to receive food. The work of repairing or replacing UNRWA schools, clinics and offices, reconstructing refugee camp roads and drains and restoring electricity supplies to the camps continued throughout 1984.
20. The regular programmes are fully described in the annual reports of the Commissioner-General of UNRWA, most recently in the report covering the period from 1 July 1983 to 30 June 1984. <sup>4/</sup> In brief, during the school year 1983/84, 342,245 children received elementary and preparatory (lower secondary) education in 653 UNRWA schools; 7,294 pupils were assisted with their secondary education at local government or private schools; some 5,050 trainees followed vocational or teacher training courses at eight UNRWA centres; 346 students were awarded scholarships for university study; modest programmes of pre-school, youth and women's activities and adult craft training were conducted; and professional in-service training was provided for medical and educational personnel. Medical services were available to about 1.8 million refugees and supplementary feeding for such vulnerable groups as young children, pregnant women and nursing mothers. In the camps, UNRWA provided environmental sanitation and assistance with repairs to housing of families in special need. Special assistance, including basic food items, was given to the most needy families. The cost of financing the regular programmes in 1984 was \$191.3 million. The programmes were conducted by 16,881 employees, mostly teachers, all but a handful of whom are themselves Palestine refugees, under the direction of 125 international staff.
21. In 1984, expenditure on the education programme was \$121 million or approximately 63 per cent of the Agency's total programme expenditure. Many UNRWA school buildings are operated on a double-shift basis to cope with the number of pupils. Some of the buildings urgently require replacement. During 1984, \$1.9 million were allocated for the construction of additional classrooms and for other urgently required education facilities. Special Canadian Government donations in 1983 and 1984 totalling over \$4 million enabled the Agency to construct additional classrooms to avoid triple shifting in elementary schools, to replace unsafe and unsatisfactory classrooms and to accomplish other much needed repair and maintenance to existing installations. A grant from Shaykh Mohammed Anis El-Zaben funded construction of a new, 20-room school in Jordan. Shaykh Mohammed and Shaykh Ibrahim Anis El-Zaben have recently undertaken to fund construction of a second school at Baqa'a, Jordan.
22. Health services accounted for \$44 million or 23 per cent of total expenditure. Health monitoring of children, pregnant women and nursing mothers was the major component of the health programme provided through a network of 98 health units. A nutrition survey was carried out in Jordan, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip; the information collected is being analysed by WHO headquarters at Geneva. Children showing growth failure receive special care in 65 nutrition rehabilitation clinics. Nutritional support was provided in the form of mid-day meals, milk and extra rations to vulnerable groups. Emphasis on the preventive aspects of oral health continued, especially among school children; two new dental clinics in Lebanon and one in Jordan were established. Treatment was available at

77 specialist clinics for diabetes, tuberculosis, ophthalmology, planned parenthood, rheumatic diseases, ear-nose-and-throat, cardio-vascular diseases, dermatology and chest diseases. Twenty-four small clinical laboratories attached to health units were equipped to perform bio-chemical tests. A study on risk factors related to death in early childhood was carried out in the West Bank and a report is under preparation.

23. With the co-operation of local municipal and governmental authorities, the Agency was able to provide refugee shelters in a number of camps with indoor taps. The Agency participated in self-help camp sanitation projects carried out by the refugees in the construction of drains and pathways in camps and in the connection of sewage systems to local networks. In its effort to upgrade the refuse collection system in camps, the Agency has approved the procurement of two fork-lift trucks and matching containers for two camps in the Gaza Strip.

24. The third category of service, the relief programme, involved expenditure in 1984 of \$22.8 million amounting to 12 per cent of total expenditure. The relief programme provides a welfare counselling service and adult craft training courses, organizes women's and youth activities centres and arranges for the education and training of disabled for all registered refugees. However, the programme is mainly concentrated on providing assistance to the most needy section of the refugee population - widows, orphans, the aged, the physically and mentally handicapped. These persons, known as "special hardship cases", numbered 99,945 at the end of 1984. They are given dry food commodities, blankets, clothing, footwear, small cash subsidies, assistance in the repair of their shelters, preferential entry to UNRWA's training centres and assistance in becoming wholly or partially self-supporting by means of income-generating projects.

### 3. United Nations Children's Fund

25. The Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) at its 1984 regular session approved commitments from general resources totalling \$1,950,000 and "noted" an amount of \$3,200,000 subject to the availability of specific purpose contributions, covering the period mid-1984 to mid-1987 to support new programmes of co-operation to assist Palestinian children and mothers in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the occupied Arab territories (West Bank and the Gaza Strip). 5/ The programmes focus on priority areas of child survival and development, pre-school, promotion of income generating activities for women and water supply and sanitation.

26. A programme co-ordinator, based at Amman, was appointed by UNICEF to assist the Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa in the development and implementation of the programmes of co-operation. Implementation officers were also assigned in Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the West Bank to monitor programme progress and ensure timely delivery of UNICEF assistance.

UNICEF assistance to the Palestinian children and mothers in Jordan

27. The UNICEF Executive Board, in 1984, approved a commitment of \$600,000 from general resources and of \$450,000 from supplementary funds, subject to the availability of specific purpose contributions, covering the period mid-1984 to mid-1987 to support a programme of co-operation aimed at improving the welfare of Palestinian children and mothers in Jordan. The main thrust of the programme relates to the priority strategies for child survival and development to appreciably reduce infant and child mortality. The programme also aims at enhancing the institutional and non-institutional approaches to child care.

28. The maternal and child health network run by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) consists of 14 clinics which serve about 10,000 families. The immunization programme carried out by UNRWA-run clinics has a coverage of 20,000 children. Efforts are being made to extend the programme coverage as well as its effectiveness through more active follow-up of defaulters. An active home visiting programme by nurses and by paramedical personnel was commenced. A training programme for 20 traditional birth attendants, known as dayas, was carried out to improve their prenatal skills and to train mothers on the prevention of diarrhoea and the use of oral rehydration salts. The UNICEF inputs to support the above activities include the provision of vaccines, syringes and needles and oral rehydration salts. Health education activities aimed at Palestinian households, communities and schools were also supported by UNICEF. An important feature is the systematic training of the teachers in UNRWA-operated schools in the content and method of health education.

29. To expand the opportunities for more pre-school age children to benefit from early childhood stimulation activities, the philanthropic societies were assisted in the establishment of five new kindergartens located in various camps. Twenty kindergarten teachers were given refresher courses in the Marka Camp. UNICEF provided furniture, knitting and sewing machines for pre-vocational workshops for women and girls run by the Family Welfare Association and the Near East Council of Churches.

UNICEF assistance to Palestinian children and mothers in Lebanon

30. UNICEF assistance to Palestinian children and mothers in Lebanon was carried out under very difficult conditions due to the continued fighting in various parts of the country.

31. In 1984 the UNICEF Executive Board approved a commitment of \$800,000 from general resources covering the period from mid-1984 to mid-1987, and "noted" an amount of \$600,000, subject to the availability of specific purpose contributions, for the purpose of providing essential services in the areas of child health, pre-school, promotion of income generating activities for women and water supply and sanitation.

32. UNICEF co-operation in the field of child health was directed to support the maternal and child health network run by the Palestinian Red Crescent Society (PRSC) and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in

the Near East (UNRWA) through the provision of vaccines, oral rehydration salts, technical medical equipment and essential drugs. UNICEF also helped finance a pre-service training course for 35 nurses at the PRCs Nursing School at Beirut and a 4-month course for eight traditional birth attendants (dayas).

33. The General Union of Palestinian Women, the Ghassan Kanafani Foundation and the Najdeh Social Association are the main philanthropic organizations providing kindergarten services to the Palestinian child. UNICEF collaborated with the said organizations in conducting refresher courses for 151 kindergarten teachers and a course for eight mothers on how to run home-based kindergarten services. In addition, UNICEF provided educational play equipment, audio-visual aids and transport as well as funds for the production of a manual for kindergarten teachers. UNICEF is in the process of producing three childrens' games and toys from the Arab cultural heritage, unique ones that will serve the region.

34. Four pre-vocational training centres in the camps of Sabra/Shatila, Rashdiyeh, Qasmieh and Bourj Shamleh were provided with sewing and knitting machines, typewriters and furniture. One hundred and twenty-three women benefited from courses conducted in these centres.

35. UNICEF, in co-operation with UNRWA and the Norwegian People's Relief Association, has started a field survey to identify disabled Palestinians in the Beirut area. The results of the survey would be used for planning purposes to establish small-scale physiotherapy centres, vocational training workshops and the development of relevant educational programmes.

36. With donations amounting to \$218,000 from the Canadian UNICEF Committee, the Canadian International Development Agency, the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization and the Arabian American Oil Company (ARAMCO), one well was dug and six others were rehabilitated in various camps at Beirut, north and south Lebanon. Courses on maintenance and operation of pumps were conducted for community leaders. Also, garbage collection campaigns were conducted and pit latrines were constructed in public places and in homes.

UNICEF assistance to Palestinian children and mothers in the Syrian Arab Republic

37. A new programme of co-operation for assistance to Palestinian children and mothers in the Syrian Arab Republic was also approved by the UNICEF Executive Board at its 1984 session. The activities to be supported include child health, pre-school services, non-formal education and water supply and sanitation. The commitment approved by the UNICEF Executive Board total \$550,000 from general resources covering the period from mid-1984 to mid-1987. The Board also "noted" an amount of \$450,000, subject to availability of specific purpose contributions, for the financing of a water supply and sanitation project in refugee camps.

38. In the area of child health, UNICEF assistance is directed to support maternal and child health services provided by 19 UNRWA-run clinics located in various refugee camps, including Yarmouk, Sitti Zeinab, Ramadan, Sasa and Gillen. Fifteen traditional birth attendants (dayas) received training to improve their pre-natal

skills. This was the first time that such courses were provided to Palestinian dayas in the Syrian Arab Republic. Through this training new functions for dayas are being introduced, namely the promotion of the Expanded Programme of Immunization (EPI) activities and the distribution of oral rehydration salts (ORS) packets to families. Health education courses focusing on child survival interventions for 50 primary school teachers and 25 pre-school teachers are being developed. UNICEF inputs for the above activities include the supply of vaccines, cold chain equipment and ORS packets to UNRWA and midwifery and first-aid kits to dayas.

39. The basic strategy adopted to expand opportunities for early childhood stimulation is to support the existing pre-school facilities sponsored by non-governmental organizations, particularly the General Union of Palestinian Women, to encourage their expansion and improve the quality of instruction, to introduce non-conventional means of early childhood stimulation such as home-based instruction of children through their mothers. In 1984, UNICEF assisted in the training of 30 kindergarten teachers and provided play materials, basic furniture and kitchen equipment to pre-school facilities in the camp of Sitti Zeinab. Two residential care institutions for orphans catering for 100 boys and 100 girls received educational materials, basic furniture, sewing and knitting machines and transport.

40. A study has been initiated to assess the needs for water supply and sanitation services in the camps of Jaramana, Sitti Zeinab, Jelen and Ain El-Tal. A project will be developed on the basis of the findings of the study and supplementary funds would be sought from interested donors to finance water and sanitation activities for these camps.

#### Assistance to Palestinian children and mothers in the occupied Arab territories

41. The UNICEF Executive Board session in 1984 noted an amount of \$1,700,000, subject to the availability of specific purpose contributions, to support a project designed to enhance the survival, growth and development of Palestinian children with particular emphasis on the early childhood period 0 to 6 years of age. The duration of the project is for three years, 1984-1987, and the Federal Republic of Germany has pledged to finance the project in total.

42. The main objectives of the project are: to upgrade and extend maternal and child health (MCH) services; to provide the use of oral rehydration therapy to reduce infant and child mortality and mortality associated with diarrhoeal diseases; to expand immunization against the most common childhood diseases; to reverse the downward trend in the practice of breastfeeding and promote improved infant feeding and weaning practices; to expand the opportunities for early childhood stimulation for children 3 to 6 years old; and to promote the prevention, early detection, and treatment of childhood disabilities, and rehabilitation. To achieve these objectives, the following strategies/means would be applied: (a) fact-finding and operational research; (b) training and skill-upgrading of various categories of personnel; (c) advocacy and promotion by various means, including mass media, of ideas and concepts related to the above objectives; and (d) provision of technical and material support in pursuit of the above objectives.



43. In the area of child survival and development, the maternal and child health services provided by Governments, charitable societies and by UNRWA were supported through the following activities of UNICEF:

(a) Forty public health nurses were trained in post-basic courses that emphasized growth monitoring techniques, oral rehydration therapy, proper infant feeding and improved surveillance of expectant mothers;

(b) One hundred and twenty traditional birth attendants (dayas) were trained to improve their prenatal skills, to monitor the growth of children 0 to 3 years of age through use of portable scales and simple growth charts and to train mothers in oral rehydration therapy;

(c) A pilot primary health care project was developed in four villages in the least developed district of Hebron in the West Bank. In the first phase of the project, four village health workers were selected by their communities and were assigned a location in their villages to be used as a focal point for health activities. The main function of village health workers is to organize prenatal care, growth monitoring of infants, promote wider coverage of EPI and provide simple health education. In the next phase, from February to the end of 1985, at least 10 more villages will be included in the project. UNICEF inputs include training costs and honoraria for village health workers, co-ordinator's salary, research and record-keeping costs and transport for supervision;

(d) UNRWA's maternal and child health services were supported by UNICEF through the provision of vaccines, cold chain equipment and oral rehydration salts.

44. UNICEF co-operated with charitable societies in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to support pre-school activities through the provision of classroom furniture to 190 kindergarten classes, which were purchased from the Palestinian Al-Bir Society of Jericho. In addition, UNICEF supported training courses for kindergarten teachers, 85 at Bethlehem and 130 in the Gaza Strip.

45. A child development centre has been established in Ramallah District. The centre is staffed by a director, a pediatrician, a psychologist, a visiting nurse/midwife and a social worker. The task of the centre is to promote the survival, growth and development of the young child. The child development centre, besides examining the children to detect possible physical and mental disabilities and referring them for follow-up treatment, maintains wide relations with all health and social welfare services in the community and acts as a focal point for information on child growth and development. A training course for intermediate level skills in physio, audio and occupational therapy was carried out in February 1985 and will last until April 1986. Some 20 candidates are being trained. UNICEF provides salary support to the core-staff of the centre, consultant fees and training costs.

#### 4. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

46. On the basis of its work previously carried out, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), in its resolution 146 (VI) of 2 July 1983, 6/ requested the Secretary-General of UNCTAD to set up a special unit to monitor and investigate the policies of the Israeli occupation authorities which were hampering the economic development of the occupied Palestinian territories. The General Assembly, in resolution 38/155 of 19 December 1983, took note of the UNCTAD resolution and provisions were made for the unit in UNCTAD's 1984/85 budget. In December, 1984 the Chief of the Unit was appointed and the Unit started its operations. Since that date, the Unit has been:

(a) Collating information available at present, identifying gaps, and seeking other sources;

(b) Co-operating with other bodies in the United Nations system and making contacts with appropriate government and non-governmental bodies and representatives. The chief of the unit has visited a number of centres in the Middle East to establish contact and set up means of transmission to UNCTAD;

(c) Contributing to other bodies' programmes within the United Nations system as appropriate.

47. While no studies were undertaken by UNCTAD on the problem during 1984, previous reports entitled "Review of the economic conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories" (TD/B/870 of 26 August 1981) and "Palestine: options for development" (TD/B/960 of 11 May 1983), were still being made available and were being requested by other organizations during the year.

48. The first of these reports (TD/B/870) concentrated on the issues to be faced if the Palestinian economy was to be strengthened and provided with a basis for future development. The issues were: emigration, the problems of the work-force, Israeli settlements, water, agriculture, industry and balance of payments. The report set the basis for future action by UNCTAD within its aim to provide a wider strategy for the development of Palestine as an emergent nation as envisaged in resolution 109 (V) of 1 June 1979. 7/ The second report (TD/B/960) dealt with the consequences of development under conditions in which there would be a substantial return of the Palestinian diaspora.

#### 5. United Nations Industrial Development Organization

49. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) is carrying out the following activities: (a) assistance to the plastic industry (\$17,670); this project is to identify the problems of the plastic industry and to make recommendations with particular emphasis on capacity utilization; (b) feasibility study on a canning plant for citrus fruits (\$53,505).

6. United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)

50. Pursuant to the various resolutions on Assistance to the Palestinian people adopted by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, Habitat has offered nine middle-level training fellowships for qualified Palestinians to be trained in various selected disciplines in the field of human settlements. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 39/169 of 17 December 1984, Habitat organized a seminar on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories at Vienna from 25 to 29 March 1985. Twelve experts participated in the seminar. In addition, a delegation from PLO participated as provided for in the resolution. Representatives of UNIDO, UNCTAD and WHO also participated. The Secretary-General will report on the seminar to the General Assembly at its fortieth session, through the Economic and Social Council. 8/

7. Economic Commission for Western Asia

51. During 1984, a study on food security issues in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip was completed. This study, which was a joint undertaking between the Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA) and the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development, dealt with a wide range of food security aspects, and made recommendations on the ways and means of promoting food production and raising nutritional standards under prevailing conditions.

52. At the request of the Palestinian Central Statistical Office a senior official from the Statistics Division of ECWA made a visit to the office from 22 to 27 October 1984, where he identified areas of possible assistance to be undertaken by ECWA in the course of 1985. These are:

- (a) Preparation of a household survey project;
- (b) Studying methods of data processing and means of developing them;
- (c) Drawing up a programme of action in the field of statistics jointly with the Palestinian Central Statistical Office;
- (d) Studying other proposals by the Office and making necessary recommendations in this respect.

53. In preparation for the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, to be held at Nairobi in 1985, ECWA has prepared two documents entitled "Assessment of the conditions of Arab Women in Western Asia during the United Nations Decade for Women" and "Strategy for development of Arab women in Western Asia to the year 2000". Both documents emphasize the issues of women and peace in the region, especially the issues of Palestinian women in the occupied territories.

54. Pursuant to its resolutions 27 (III) of 14 May 1976, 123 (X) of 11 May 1983, and 124 (XI) of 26 April 1984, ECWA requested an intergovernmental ad hoc committee composed of seven members to consider the observations of members on a study

entitled "Final report on the economic and social situation and potential of the Palestinian Arab people", commissioned earlier by ECWA, and produce a new version of the study, within a period not exceeding eight months. The meeting of the ad hoc committee did not take place. At its twelfth session, in April 1985, the Commission adopted resolution 141 (XII) by which it referred the "study" to the secretariat for revision, with the participation of PLO, Jordan and any other member States that so wished. Observations made or those that might be communicated up to the end of June 1985 would be taken into account. It also decided that the committee should begin its work not later than one month after 25 April 1985 and complete its task by the end of August 1985 at the latest. The Commission also requested the Executive Secretary to invite members to a governmental meeting to be held not later than the end of October 1985 to approve the study.

#### 8. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

55. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) has contributed indirectly to the provision of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, through co-operation with the Economic Commission for Western Asia, in promoting economic and technical co-operation and/or information exchange. For instance, in connection with the Transport and Communication Decade for Asia and the Pacific, 1985-1994, experts from ESCAP and ECWA exchanged views on how to co-ordinate their respective programmes in transport as called for in the Economic and Social Council resolution 1984/78 of 27 July 1984.

#### 9. Centre for Science and Technology for Development

56. Within its mandate to assist the Intergovernmental Committee in the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action, the Centre has undertaken activities aimed at the strengthening of the science and technology capacity of developing countries that are of relevance to the economic and social development of the Palestinian people. Thus the regional review for the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action (Baghdad, 17 to 20 February 1985), which was undertaken by ECWA in close co-operation with the Centre, led to the adoption of a number of recommendations which were based, among other things, on the need to enhance the ability of the Palestinian people in the development of their endogenous capacity for the application of science and technology for development.

#### 10. Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs

57. The Centre has prepared a report on the situation of women and children living in the occupied Arab territories and other occupied territories which will be submitted to the 1985 World Conference to review and appraise the achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace (A/CONF.116/6).\*

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\* In this connection see document A/40/188-E/1985/60.

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## B. Specialized agencies

### 1. International Labour Organisation

58. The current activities of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in the field of assistance to the Palestinian people are based on a resolution adopted by the International Labour Conference at its sixty-sixth session (June 1980) concerning the implications of Israeli settlements in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories in connection with the situation of Arab workers. That resolution, inter alia, requests the Governing Body of the International Labour Office and the Director-General "to provide all types of assistance and support to Arab citizens in Palestine and the other occupied territories to strengthen their economic and technical capabilities and to counteract the effects of the Israeli occupation and settlement policy".

59. The latest report on the situation of workers in the occupied Arab territories was submitted by the Director-General of ILO to the International Labour Conference at its seventieth session (June 1984). It was prepared on the basis of missions to the Arab countries directly involved for consultations with government officials, employers and workers in those countries and with the Palestinian organizations based there, and on missions to Israel and the occupied territories for an on-the-spot inspection of the situation of the Arab workers. The report presented a series of recommendations for improving the situation, particularly in terms of employment, vocational training, working conditions, social security and trade union rights, and in the light of the implications of the establishment of Israeli settlements on the situation of Arab workers.

60. The report also devoted a special section to ongoing and projected technical assistance for the population of the occupied Arab territories. The ILO had participated in the formulation of two projects in the fields of labour and training which were to be implemented by UNDP. One, relating to the promotion of vocational and technical education, is operational. Its aim is to expand the existing vocational training facilities offered by the centres of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), government services or private institutions to enable them to meet urgent needs. Additional premises have been built and the necessary equipment purchased and delivered. The courses provided with UNDP assistance include two for radio and television repairers on the West Bank and a similar one in the Gaza Strip. There is also a course for repairers of air-conditioning equipment, refrigerators and household appliances, as well as two training courses for women's jobs. The other project, for specific training to meet urgent needs in the field of industrial management, was implemented during the second half of 1984 at the ILO International Centre for Advanced Technical and Vocational Training in Turin. It has enabled 19 managers of small and medium-sized undertakings in the occupied territories to improve their managerial skills and to acquire new technological know-how, especially with a view to the replacement of production equipment.

61. Apart from the participation of the Turin Centre in the implementation of the UNDP projects of assistance to the Palestinian people, the Director-General offered the services of ILO experts. Consequently, an ILO expert in the vocational

training of women was made available to UNDP to implement a project of assistance to Palestinian women's institutions. This project is designed to expand the vocational training opportunities offered by these institutions and by Palestinian community development centres.

62. As in the previous biennium, the Director-General made an additional allocation from the organization's regular budget for 1984-1985 to finance technical assistance projects for the population of the occupied territories. Isolated assistance activities in this respect had already been implemented in the past, especially by the International Centre for Advanced Technical and Vocational Training, which provided assistance in the form of vocational training fellowships to Palestinians from advanced training institutions on the West Bank. Only a small number of scholarships, five in fact, were ultimately awarded in 1984, enabling the recipients to attend a course on the management of vocational training institutions. However, the invitation remains open to make as much use as possible of the opportunities provided by the Turin Centre's programmes, which are likely to be of interest to a wide range of occupational categories since they provide training opportunities for officers of trade unions, employers' organizations and co-operatives or in the technical spheres of special interest to the region.

63. In dealing with the development of technical co-operation for the benefit of the populations of the territories concerned, the report generally showed that some activities were undertaken and successfully implemented whereas others encountered delays or various obstacles and that closer and more co-operation between ILO and UNDP was possible. In order to further the necessary implementation of an expanded technical assistance programme in this field, the Director-General has recommended to the various parties concerned that all necessary steps should be taken with a view to implementing proposals based on the suggestions outlined in his report and that funding should be made available for the achievement of those objectives.

## 2. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

64. During the period under review, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) assistance to the Palestinian people continued to be in the area of training, including an agricultural training centre and specialized training in agricultural development.

65. FAO is the executing agency of the agricultural training centre project which has a budget of \$356,000 provided from the UNDP Programme Reserve. Its objective is to assist the Palestinian families of Gilline and Ramadan refugee camps in the Syrian Arab Republic to improve the production and efficiency of crop and livestock farmers and producers by providing facilities, knowledge, skills, materials-inputs and technical leadership for demonstration and training work.

66. The project dealing with specialized training in agricultural development (\$84,000) provides for the award of three fellowships for university graduates.

67. The objective is to offer the required means for improving and updating the technical skill of three university graduates in animal husbandry, soil science and plant protection through intensive training programmes. The fellowship in soil science is completed and nominations for the other two fellowships are expected.

68. This follows a similar project which provided three fellowships in botany, food technology and agricultural engineering.

3. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

69. In resolution 2.1 adopted by the General Conference at its twenty-second session on 21 November 1983, the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is invited to continue co-operation with UNRWA, UNDP and the other institutions providing educational assistance to refugees and national liberation movements, inter alia, the Palestine Liberation Organization, and to strengthen activities aimed at training the professional personnel of these movements.

70. The agreement between UNESCO and UNRWA, whereby UNESCO assumes technical responsibilities for the education programme for Palestinian refugees, has been renewed for 1984-1985. Within the framework of this agreement, specialists are seconded to the UNRWA/UNESCO Department of Education to plan and supervise the operation of schools and centres in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. In 1984-1985, 20 specialists, including the Director of the Department, are provided for this programme as well as educational supplies and equipment.

71. In accordance with resolution 14.1 adopted by the General Conference at its twenty-first session, on 27 October 1980, the Director-General is continuing his efforts with the parties concerned in order to maintain the functioning of the cultural and educational institutions in the occupied Arab territories. A report on these efforts is regularly submitted to the Executive Board and a contribution to the Secretary-General's report is made in conformity with the relevant General Assembly resolutions.

72. In conformity with various resolutions adopted by the General Conference concerning the preservation of all cultural properties in the Old City of Jerusalem, the Director-General sent a personal representative to visit Jerusalem on many occasions for the protection of the cultural heritage of the Holy City. The latest such visit took place early in March 1985. A sum of \$100,000 was contributed for technical studies relating to the restoration of five historical monuments in Jerusalem which were in a particularly deteriorated state.

73. In addition to the 35 fellowships granted from the regular programme for 1981-1983, nine fellowships have been granted from the Participation Programme and six from the Special Fund. A consultant has been hired to advise the Palestinian Literacy Council. In 1984-1985, 11 fellowships have so far been granted under the Participation Programme for training in civil engineering, architecture, mathematics, informatics etc.

74. Pursuant to a recommendation adopted by the Conference of Ministers of Education and those responsible for economic planning in the Arab States for the establishment of a UNESCO trust fund for financing scholarships for Palestinian

students, UNESCO opened a special account for that fund and has already received contributions from some Arab States. Another special account was opened for assistance to PLO with a financial contribution from the Iraqi Government for an amount of \$50,000.

#### 4. World Health Organization

75. Following General Assembly resolution 38/83 A of 15 December 1983 regarding the extension of UNRWA's mandate until 30 June 1987, the WHO/UNRWA agreement was also extended until that date in accordance with the World Health Assembly resolution WHA22.25 adopted at its twenty-second session, in July 1969. WHO continued its close collaboration with UNRWA by sustaining the secondment of the health team. Through UNRWA, assistance was provided in the fields of child health, diarrhoeal diseases control, immunization and environmental health.

76. In follow-up to the request for immunization of Palestinian women against German measles, mentioned in the last report, vaccines and diagnostic kits were provided.

77. As part of WHO's efforts to achieve a comprehensive system of health care to the Palestinian people, the organization is continuing to support the development of basic radiological services (BRS) for better radiological coverage. The BRS machine offered earlier, has now been installed in the Beqaa Valley Health Centre.

78. WHO has continued to award fellowships for the training of physicians and nurses in such areas as Maternal and Child Health (MCH), public health administration and clinical/tropical medicine. The organization also provided a consultant on the control of diarrhoeal diseases who, in collaboration with UNRWA staff, carried out two further training courses for physicians and nurses serving the Palestinian people. One was on oral rehydration and the other in the management of acute diarrhoea, which no doubt will have an impact on the proper management of severe cases and will greatly contribute to the reduction of mortality from diarrhoeal diseases. WHO staff and a short-term consultant assisted in a one-month food supervisors/nutrition course for UNRWA staff held at Amman in July-August 1984.

79. Achievements in the control of communicable diseases are reflected in the fact that Palestinians are now living in malaria-free areas and assistance in this field is no longer required.

80. WHO provided the services of one of its field staff - a sanitary engineer - for a period of two weeks in February 1985 for review of the existing environmental health facilities and programmes in the West Bank and providing technical advice, as required.

81. The Director-General, in close collaboration with UNDP, has followed up resolution WHA36.27 adopted by the World Health Assembly at its thirty-sixth session in May 1986, regarding the establishment of three health centres in the occupied Arab territories. Funds have been mobilized for the launching of the first WHO Collaborating Centre in Primary Health Care Research, at Ramallah.



Specific research activities at Ramallah are expected to begin shortly. WHO inputs will consist of support to training, supply of equipment and essential consultant services. Negotiations regarding the other two centres are proceeding. It is anticipated that the second centre will be in the Gaza Strip, with emphasis on epidemiological studies related to primary health care, and a proposal for designation of that centre has been formally submitted to the authorities.

82. The Special Committee of Experts visited the occupied territories in April 1984 and reported its findings to the thirty-seventh World Health Assembly (document A37/13). In spite of the difficult situation which exists in the territories, the Committee was convinced that the health conditions could be improved if the recommendations it had made in previous reports continued to be implemented. WHO will continue to take into consideration these recommendations, in collaboration with the competent authorities, in planning future activities.

#### 5. International Maritime Organization

83. In accordance with the agreement of 1984 between the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and UNRWA, consultations are currently taking place for the purpose of determining appropriate arrangements for providing training facilities for suitably qualified Palestinians in the maritime field.

#### 6. World Intellectual Property Organization

84. Under the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) training programme for 1984, a fellowship was awarded in the copyright field to one candidate selected from a group of three candidatures submitted by UNRWA. In addition, one fellowship has been awarded in the industrial property field, but training has not yet been started.

### III. FUTURE AND/OR PROPOSED ACTIVITIES: DEVELOPMENT OF A CO-ORDINATED PROGRAMME OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE TO THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

85. This section contains information provided by the organizations of the United Nations system on their future activities involving economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people. In order to move towards a co-ordinated programme of assistance, activities have been grouped into three broad categories, as follows: (a) development activities; (b) education and training; and (c) health. Where available, total funds needed for an activity are stated or indicated in parentheses.

A. Development activities

United Nations Development Programme

86. UNDP is currently seeking voluntary contributions in order to implement a wide range of pipeline projects which are at present under review with the representatives of the Palestinian people and the concerned authorities. The pipeline includes such projects as assistance to small-scale farmers (\$1.2 million), agricultural and hydrology laboratories (\$200,000), a plums and grapes processing factory in the West Bank (\$20,000), development of olive groves and olive oil production (\$200,000), assistance to the Gaza fishermen (\$650,000), women's institutions (\$250,000), village and rural roads (\$1 million), development of stone-cutting, glass and ceramic engineering technology (\$400,000).

87. Over the past four years, an excellent record of programme delivery has been maintained, and there are excellent prospects for the future. However, the viability of the UNDP programme of assistance to the Palestinian people is entirely dependent on the provision of additional funds in the form of voluntary contributions from Governments and intergovernmental institutions, in response to appeals of the UNDP Governing Council and the General Assembly.

United Nations Children's Fund

88. UNICEF will continue its programmes of co-operation to assist Palestinian children and mothers in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the occupied Arab territories as described in paragraphs 25 to 45 above. Available financial support from UNICEF general resources for the period 1985-1987 are as follows: \$671,000 for Jordan; \$716,000 for Lebanon; and \$546,000 for the Syrian Arab Republic. In addition \$1,295,000 has been pledged to UNICEF by the Federal Republic of Germany in support of a programme to assist Palestinian children and mothers in the West Bank and Gaza.

89. UNICEF is seeking supplementary funds from interested donors to finance water supply and sanitation activities in refugee camps in northern and southern areas of Lebanon as well as in the Beqaa Valley. The amount being sought is \$596,000 for the period 1985-1987 and will be used, among other things, to provide chemical kits and chlorinators to ensure safe drinking water in various camps and to construct new wells. In addition, garbage grinders and incinerators will be provided to improve environmental sanitation in the camps in Lebanon.

90. Similarly, \$500,000 in donations is being sought to finance a water supply and sanitation project designed to provide safe drinking water to 30,000 Palestinians living in the camps of Jaramana and Qabr Essit in the Syrian Arab Republic. The activities to be supported include the construction of two wells (one in each camp), an elevated reservoir of 60 cubic metres capacity in Jeramana camp and the extension of the water distribution network in both camps, as well as improving the sewage systems.

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

91. In its work programme for 1985 and the immediate future beyond, the Special Unit established pursuant to UNCTAD resolution 146 (VI) has included a number of specific tasks in pursuit of its mandate. Among these are:

(a) Further development of the data base established in the course of the previous studies mentioned;

(b) A number of organizations in the Arab world are being visited during the early part of the year to introduce the work of the Unit to them and to establish channels for receipt of information by UNCTAD. Although UNCTAD already has contacts with most of these organizations, the existence of the Unit in UNCTAD will enable these contacts to be more continuous, and UNCTAD's monitoring role will be facilitated;

(c) In direct pursuit of its mandate, the Unit will be monitoring and investigating the policies affecting the situation in the occupied territories, paying strict attention to the restrictions on trade and development which ensue. It is already anticipated that the restrictions on external trade, on the use by the Palestinian people of their indigenous resources such as land and water, and on public and private investment will figure prominently in the topics investigated;

(d) A report on the year's work will be submitted to the Trade and Development Board at its thirty-first session, to be held in September 1985, and to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, as required by UNCTAD resolution 146 (VI). In this, as in other reports prepared by UNCTAD, regard will be paid to the identification of policies and measures for the future development of the Palestinian economy and for the improvement of the economic conditions of the Palestinian people.

92. The Unit will concentrate on analysis, studies and reports. Extrabudgetary resources will be needed in order for UNCTAD to provide more direct operational assistance aimed at developing and strengthening the Palestinian economy.

United Nations Industrial Development Organization

93. UNIDO plans to undertake studies for the establishment of (a) industrial seaport facilities and (b) a Palestinian industrial development bank.

United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)

94. Pursuant to resolution 7/8 of 10 May 1984 of the Commission on Human Settlements, Habitat 9/ has prepared, for submission to the eighth session of the Commission, a study on the possibility of carrying out a housing programme for the Palestinian population in the occupied Palestinian territories on the occasion of the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless in 1987.

Economic Commission for Western Asia

95. Under ECWA resolution 139 (XII) the Executive Secretary of ECWA has been asked to ensure that all available data and information relating to the occupied Palestinian territories are included in all studies and statistical abstracts issued by the Commission at the regional level. The Executive Secretary is also called upon to include in the programme of work and priorities for the period 1986-1987 studies, in co-operation with the concerned Arab and international organizations, on economic and social conditions in the occupied Palestinian territories, such as may serve to strengthen the resistance of the Palestinian people in those areas, and to prepare studies on the population situation, the Israeli settlement policy aimed at changing the demographic structure and destroying the Palestinian character of the occupied Palestinian territories, and studies relating to support for the industrial sector, particularly existing industries, and the solution of the problems from which they suffer, such as those of marketing, finance, manpower and raw materials. The resolution also appealed to the international and Arab organizations concerned with problems of social and economic development to assist the Executive Secretary in the preparation and execution of such specialized studies.

United Nations Environment Programme

96. UNEP will work through thematic joint programming with ECWA on strengthening a multidisciplinary data base by identifying and emphasizing the environmental statistics essentially needed for enhancing indigenous environmental awareness in pursuing sustained development projects for Palestinian communities in occupied territories.

97. In 1985 or 1986, UNEP will organize, upon the request of the Palestine Liberation Organization, a technical meeting to address specific environmental problems confronting the Palestinian people.

Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs

98. Pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1984/18 of 24 May 1984, the Centre will prepare:

(a) An updated version of the report on the situation of women and children living in the Arab occupied territories for submission to the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-first session in 1986;

(b) A comprehensive report on the situation of Palestinian women living within and outside the occupied Arab territories for submission to the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-second session in 1988. An interim report on this question will be submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-first session in 1986.

International Labour Organisation

99. In 1984 ILO identified a series of additional proposals for assistance in its fields of competence to supplement its participation in the relevant UNDP programme. Some of these proposals had already been selected in 1979 by the inter-agency group for assistance to the Palestinian people, while others were identified by ILO since then. They consist of ideas for projects for the following activities: (a) opportunities for training through the International Centre for Advanced Technical and Vocational Training in Turin in the following areas: occupational safety and health, teacher training, training for managers of co-operatives, management of vocational training institutions; (b) assistance in the development of co-operatives and assistance to employers' and trade union organizations; (c) the preparation of two studies on the social security and employment market aspects, respectively, of the situation in the occupied territories.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

100. The following projects can be executed by UNESCO in the area of culture, should be required funding be available:

Palestinian National Archives

(a) Collection and reconstitution of the national, historical, social, economic and cultural archives of the Palestinian people, and preparation of an inventory of manuscripts;

(b) Studies and research on the Palestinian cultural heritage;

(c) Complete inventory of the movable Palestinian cultural heritage;

(d) Programme of action on Palestinian literature, including, in particular, the translation into English, French and Spanish of representative works in various literary categories;

(e) Preparation of works on Palestinian archaeological sites;

(f) Provision of financial assistance to the International Association for the Protection and Development of the Palestinian Cultural Heritage;

(g) Recording on microfilm of manuscripts, works and documents kept in various mosques, churches, museums, libraries, universities and public and private foundations on the subject of the Palestinian people, giving priority to works and archives in occupied Arab territories.

101. In order to carry out this major project, it will first be necessary to acquire the necessary equipment and the services of qualified specialists. Estimated cost of all the actions in the area of culture: approximately \$4 million.

International Telecommunication Union

102. For 1985 one work/month of expertise is planned to carry out a survey on Palestinian needs in the field of telecommunications, and to prepare a detailed proposal for future technical co-operation with PLO, starting in 1987. The resources available in ITU for implementing the proposed activities for 1985 are approximately \$12,000.

B. Education and training

United Nations Development Programme

103. The proposed activities of UNDP in the education sector include building additional classrooms in rural villages (\$1 million), and providing teachers' training for higher education (\$400,000), and assistance to primary and secondary education in Gaza (\$250,000), development and strengthening of the agricultural educational institutions in El Arub (\$224,000), training of specialists for glass and ceramics work referred to earlier.

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

104. UNRWA intends to continue and improve the activities described in paragraphs 17 to 24 above subject to the availability of funds.

United Nations Children's Fund

105. UNICEF will continue its assistance to pre-school services for Palestinian children during the period 1985-1987 through financing in-service training courses for kindergarten teachers and the provision of basic furniture, audio-visual equipment, indoor and outdoor play materials, and children's books to pre-school facilities. By 1987, it is expected that 130 kindergarten teachers in Lebanon and 90 teachers each in Jordan, the Syrian Arab Republic and in the occupied Arab territories (West Bank and Gaza), will have been enrolled in refresher courses. Basic furniture and educational and play materials will be provided to 44 pre-school facilities in Lebanon, 9 in Jordan, 40 in the Syrian Arab Republic and 15 in the West Bank and Gaza. Negotiations are under way with UNRWA sponsored vocational training centres in Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic for the production of the needed furniture. A Palestinian vocational training institution operated by the Al-Bir Society at Jericho has been contracted by UNICEF to produce basic furniture for pre-school facilities in the West Bank. Pre-vocational training and literacy classes for the benefit of young girls and women will be supported by UNICEF. Sewing, knitting and embroidery machines and typewriters will be provided to 18 workshops in Lebanon, 24 in Jordan and 6 in the Syrian Arab Republic. UNICEF plans to finance 32 literacy classes for 800 women in Lebanon and to support in-service training courses for 60 literacy instructors in Jordan.

United Nations Fund for Population Activities

106. In February 1984, UNFPA was requested to support the financing of six fellowships for post-graduate studies in various specializations falling within the UNFPA mandate. Three of the fellowships are to be undertaken at the Cairo Demographic Centre and the other three at universities in Western countries. These fellowships would be in the field of population data collection and analysis, population education information and communication, maternal and child health and family planning, and population and development. The fellowships will be implemented through the UNDP approved programme for teachers' training for higher education designed to fill shortages of qualified teacher staff in universities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Funds are available once suitable candidates are nominated. No constraints or problems in implementation are foreseen.

United Nations Environment Programme

107. UNEP is prepared to assist in training the sanitary staff of Arab municipalities in occupied territories. A short training course in co-operation with WHO has been proposed.

United Nations Industrial Development Organization

108. UNIDO plans to undertake a training programme specifically designed for the Palestinian people in co-operation with the International Centre for Advanced Technical and Vocational Training in the following fields: (a) organization and management of industrial co-operatives; (b) policy and consultancy activities in small-scale industrial enterprises.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

109. FAO will continue its assistance to the Palestinian people in the area of training, including an agricultural training centre and specialized training in agricultural development, as described in paragraphs 64-68 above.

110. On the basis of specific requests, FAO would be ready to consider applications for fellowships in agricultural training from suitably qualified Palestine refugee students.

International Labour Organisation

111. ILO could undertake training through the International Centre at Turin in the following areas: work safety and hygiene; teacher training; training of officers of co-operatives; operation of vocational training institutions.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

112. The following projects can be executed by UNESCO in the area of education, should the required funding be available:

Training

(a) Increasing and strengthening of financial means for the granting of scholarships by all agencies of the United Nations system in their sphere of competence;

(b) Establishment of a scholarship fund to be financed by gifts, in accordance with resolution 21 C/14.1 adopted by the General Conference on 25 November 1983;

Amount: \$1 million

(c) Financial assistance for the production of school and university textbooks in various disciplines such as history, sociology, economy, the sciences and cultural heritage;

Open university: financial assistance for:

(a) Preparation of textbooks;

(b) Organization of training courses for the teaching staff;

(c) Purchase of equipment for the university.

Amount: \$1 million

Educational and cultural institutions

(a) Increased financial assistance for the equipment of educational institutions within the universities of the occupied Arab territories and in Lebanon;

Amount: \$500,000

(b) Financial assistance for the reconstruction of Palestinian educational and cultural institutions in Lebanon;

Amount: \$1 million

Estimated cost of all action in the area of education: approximately \$4 million.

International Telecommunication Union

113. ITU is planning to provide two fellowships for Palestinian candidates for training in the field of communications.



Universal Postal Union

114. The agency is planning the following activities for the period 1986-1990: two four-year fellowships for two Palestinian students at the Arab Postal Faculty at Damascus.

115. The total amount of the UPU contribution for the four years will be \$48,000.

World Intellectual Property Organization

116. WIPO has invited the Commissioner-General of UNRWA, the Secretary of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, and the Permanent Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization at Geneva to propose candidates for the 1985 WIPO training programme in the field of copyright and industrial property.

C. Health

World Health Organization

117. Continued collaboration with UNRWA, allocation of funds to the Palestinian Red Crescent Society and provision of fellowships and training have been approved for the biennium 1986-1987.

118. A second basic radiological services machine will be provided for the Bureij TB hospital at Gaza. This machine along with the one already installed in Beqaa will greatly improve the diagnostic facilities supporting primary health care for the Palestinian people.

119. The following new or continuing activities are also proposed:

(a) Training of trainers of community health workers in information education for health and new policies and approaches in primary health care;

(b) Health protection and promotion: improvement of Maternal and Child Health (MCH) services including the provision of relevant WHO publications and other educational material; assistance in selection and procurement of essential drugs, and reorganization and expansion of existing facilities; upgrading of skills of health workers in basic laboratory techniques; rehabilitation project;

(c) Disease prevention and control: provision of consultants to advise on prevention and control of specific diseases; provision of essential supplies and equipment; development of manpower in various fields;

(d) Environmental health: follow-up action on recommendations of the report of the WHO Sanitary Engineer; feasibility studies of medium-term investment programme - a two-man team for a period of two months; training could be enhanced through on-site courses for sanitarians and for higher level training abroad; development of water quality surveillance and control programme; study of development and organization of solid-waste management systems.

120. Funds have already been earmarked through to 1987 for a certain number of activities. However, further funds would have to be sought from extrabudgetary sources to enable WHO to carry out some of the new projects.

121. With the introduction of an immunization programme, communicable diseases are now well controlled. However, a new morbidity pattern is gradually emerging and the services of a WHO consultant on diabetes was requested to assess the prevalence of the disease. Unfortunately it was not possible to implement this activity in 1984 as the consultants approached were not available to undertake the assignment; it is hoped that this will be effected in the course of the current year.

122. Manpower resources are available (WHO specialized staff, consultants and so on) but the major problem remains that of funding. While the organization will continue to do its utmost to provide all possible assistance, many of the proposed activities cannot be carried out because of budgetary constraints.

#### United Nations Children's Fund

123. UNICEF will continue its activities in the area of child health as described in paragraphs 25 to 45 above with the aim of enhancing the survival, growth and development of infants and children with emphasis on age group 0-5. The key strategy to be pursued is the reduction of infant mortality and morbidity through effective immunization programmes, growth monitoring techniques for infants and children age group 0-5, systematic and universal use of oral rehydration therapy to cut down on morbidity and mortality due to dehydration from repeated diarrhoeal episodes. UNICEF inputs will include the supply of vaccines, cold chain equipment, oral rehydration salts, midwifery and first-aid kits to dayas, technical medical equipment and essential drugs. Also, financial support will be provided for training programmes to improve the skills of paramedical personnel involved in UNICEF assisted activities as well as for dayas in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and in the occupied Arab territories (West Bank and Gaza). The main collaborating agencies involved will include UNRWA, the Palestinian Red Crescent Society and governmental health services available for Palestinians.

124. UNICEF is planning to support research projects to be carried out in Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic to determine the prevalence of hearing and vision defects among young children and subsequently to develop programmes for the prevention and low-cost treatment of childhood disabilities. In the West Bank and Gaza, UNICEF will continue to support the child development centre at Ramallah and will help in the establishment of a similar centre in the Hebron district. Also under consideration is the establishment of a third centre either in the Gaza Strip or at Nablus. These centres will act as community-based institutions for the promotion of sound ideas on the prevention and early detection of childhood disabilities and will refer children to relevant institutions for follow-up treatment.

United Nations Development Programme

125. UNDP proposed activities would provide medical equipment for hospitals (\$3 million), operational requirements of the UNDP-sponsored Medical Services Training Centre at Bethlehem (\$5.5 million), and mobile clinics for rural villages (\$1 million). It will also participate in a joint project, financed by WHO, dealing with primary health care research, at Ramallah. The pipeline projects also cover sanitation and water supply in rural villages (\$2 million) and a large sewage disposal scheme in the Gaza Strip, which is considered as a project of the highest priority (\$5 million). The Government of the United States of America has committed \$1 million to the sewage disposal scheme project in the Gaza Strip. The President of the Arab Gulf Programme for the United Nations Development Organizations (AGFUND), His Royal Highness Prince Talal Bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud, also announced that \$1 million will be allocated to this project which is expected to become operational during 1985.

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

126. UNRWA intends to continue and improve the activities described in paragraphs 17 to 24 above, subject to the availability of funds.

IV. CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

127. As has been indicated above, organs and organizations of the United Nations system have been providing economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people in accordance with their respective mandates. Given the complexity of the issues and circumstances involved, it is difficult at this stage to provide specific information on all aspects of the activities with a detailed assessment of financial requirements. The present effort builds upon the experience in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 38/145 and provides fuller information on proposed or planned activities for the future in a thematic framework. It is an attempt to move further towards developing a co-ordinated programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people in accordance with General Assembly resolution 39/224.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1980, Supplement No. 12 (E/1980/42/Rev.1), chap. II.E.

2/ Ibid., 1979, Supplement No. 10, chap. XXI.

3/ Ibid., 1982, Supplement No. 6, annex I.

4/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/39/13).

Notes (continued)

5/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1984, Supplement No. 9, annex VI.

6/ See Proceedings of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Sixth Session, vol. I, Report and Annexes (United Nations publication Sales No. E.83.II.D.6), part one, sect. A.

7/ Ibid., Fifth Session, vol. I, Report and Annexes (United Nations publication Sales No. E.79.II.D.14), part one, sect. A.

8/ See the report of the Secretary-General on "Living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories" (A/40/373-E/1985/99).

9/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 8 (A/39/18), annex I.

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Agenda item 21  
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING  
OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL  
COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES BY THE  
SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THE  
INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS  
ASSOCIATED WITH THE  
UNITED NATIONS

Assistance to the Palestinian people

Report of the Secretary-General

Corrigendum

1. Page 13, paragraph 49

At the end of the paragraph insert Both studies are expected to be completed before the end of August 1985.

2. Page 16, paragraph 59, line 3

For seventieth session (June 1984) read seventy-first session (June 1985)

3. Page 17, paragraph 62

Lines 10 and 11 should read institutions. However, use had continued to be made of the opportunities afforded by the programmes of the Turin Centre, which are likely to

\* A/40/150.

At the end of the paragraph insert For example, a dozen fellowships had recently been awarded to enable Palestinians from the occupied territories to take a training course in industrial management in the second half of 1985.

4. Pages 19 and 20, paragraph 81

For the existing text substitute

81. The Director-General, in close collaboration with UNDP, has followed up resolution WHA36.27, adopted by the World Health Assembly at its thirty-sixth session in May 1983, regarding the establishment of three health centres in the occupied Arab territories. WHO input will consist of support to training, supply of equipment and essential consultant services. The full responsibility for technical supervision of the primary health care research work, which will be undertaken by each centre, will rest with WHO. The overall objective of the work will be to support health systems research that will be used in providing the entire local population with primary health care, using the most appropriate technology. There has been steady progress in the following health centres:

(a) At Ramallah, formally designated a WHO Collaborating Centre in Primary Health Care, work is under way at the Health Service Research Centre, where specific research projects have already started. These projects will include an evaluation of a plan for expanded primary health care in the villages of the area; evaluative studies of the practices and outcome of the work of traditional birth attendants as a component of primary health care; continuation of previous studies of growth and development of infants and children; evaluative studies on the effects of the intensive programme of immunization against tetanus neonatorum and adult tetanus; evaluation of the routine immunization programme for the prevention of rubella; a study to assess the utilization and impact of oral rehydration therapy in primary health care and in hospital centres; basic epidemiological studies of acute respiratory diseases and of villages in the area, in the epidemiology of hepatitis and of brucellosis, as well as studies related to nutrition, breast-feeding and anaemia;

(b) In the Gaza Strip, the Epidemiology and Health Information Centre of the health services of Gaza will also be designated a WHO Collaborating Centre. It is anticipated that a costed work plan for specific activities will be presented to the authorities concerned in the very near future;

(c) It is anticipated that a third centre, the focus of which will be primarily on health manpower research in relation to primary health care, will be designated at an early date.

5. Page 21, paragraph 88, second sentence

For the existing sentence substitute Financial support from UNICEF general resources, which have already been approved and allocated by the UNICEF Executive Board for expenditure from 1985 onwards, amounts to \$671,000 for Jordan, \$716,000 for Lebanon and \$546,000 for the Syrian Arab Republic.

6. Page 22, paragraph 93

For the existing text substitute

93. UNIDO plans to undertake studies for:

(a) The establishment of industrial seaport facilities, already in the formulation stage;

(b) A Palestinian industrial bank, for which funds have been secured; its establishment is expected in the near future.

7. Page 22, paragraph 94

For the existing text substitute

94. At its eighth session held at Kingston, Jamaica, from 29 April to 19 May 1985, the Commission on Human Settlements adopted resolution 8/9, entitled "Activities for the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless in the occupied Palestinian territories", 9/ in which it requested the Executive Director to prepare "a study on the housing of the Palestinian population in the occupied territories in co-ordination with the Palestine Liberation Organization and concerned United Nations agencies". The Executive Director was requested to submit the study to the Commission at its ninth session. Pursuant to the above request, Habitat has recruited two consultants to assist with the preparation of the study, which will, inter alia, include a review of the current human settlement situation in the occupied Palestinian territories and proposals for a comprehensive housing programme for the Palestinian population in those territories on the occasion of the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless (1987).

8. Page 24, paragraph 99

At the end of the paragraph insert At the latest International Labour Conference (June 1985), the Director-General had expressed the hope that greater resources would be made available for the assistance of workers in the occupied territories in order to enable ILO to increase its aid in the areas within its competence.

9. Page 26, paragraph 108

For the existing text substitute

108. UNIDO plans to undertake training programmes specifically designed for the Palestinian people in co-operation with the International Centre for Advanced Technical and Vocational Training. The training programmes will consist of the following:

(a) Organization and management of industrial co-operatives, for which funds are being sought;

(b) Policy and consultancy activities in small-scale industrial enterprises, for which funds have been secured; implementation of the programme is expected to commence in the near future;

(c) Participation of Palestinian candidates in numerous group training programmes and workshops arranged as a part of the regular activities.

10. Page 31, notes

Note 9 should read Official Records of the General Assembly, Fortieth Session, Supplement No. 8 (A/40/8), annex I.

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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL  
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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING  
OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL  
COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES BY THE  
SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THE  
INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS  
ASSOCIATED WITH THE UNITED  
NATIONS

Assistance to the Palestinian people

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The General Assembly in resolution 39/224 of 18 December 1984, inter alia, requested the Secretary-General (a) to expedite the finalizing, through existing inter-agency mechanisms, of the co-ordinated programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people requested in General Assembly resolution 38/145 of 19 December 1983; (b) to convene in 1985 a meeting of the relevant programmes, organizations, agencies, funds and organs of the United Nations system to consider the co-ordinated programmes of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people; and (c) to provide for the participation in the meeting of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the Arab host countries and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

\* A/40/150.

\*\* E/1985/100.

2. Accordingly, the Secretary-General convened a meeting at Geneva on 5 and 8 July 1985. In accordance with resolution 39/224, representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization and of the Arab host countries participated in the meeting.
3. Representatives of the following programmes, organizations, agencies and organs of the United Nations system attended the meeting: Department of International Economic and Social Affairs and Department of Technical Co-operation for Development of the United Nations Secretariat, Economic Commission for Africa, Economic Commission for Western Asia, Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, United Nations Industrial Development Organization, United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Centre for Human Settlements, United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Fund for Population Activities, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, World Food Programme, International Labour Organisation, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, World Health Organization, Universal Postal Union, International Telecommunication Union, and International Maritime Organization.
4. The following intergovernmental organizations were represented: Council of Europe, European Economic Community, Organization of the Islamic Conference, and Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.
5. The following non-governmental organizations were represented: Arab Jurists Union, Arab Lawyers Union, Caritas Internationalis, Middle East Council of Churches, World Federation of Trade Unions, and World Peace Council.
6. The Director in the Office of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation acted as Chairman.
7. The meeting had before it the report of the Secretary-General on assistance to the Palestinian people (A/40/353-E/1985/115 and corrigendum).
8. The meeting was informed that, as requested in resolution 39/224, the Secretariat had utilized an existing inter-agency mechanism, namely, the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Programme Matters) (CCSQ (PROG)) of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, for consultations with organizations and agencies on the co-ordinated programme. CCSQ (PROG) considered the question in April 1985. It was agreed at that meeting that, in order to move towards a co-ordinated programme of economic and social assistance for the Palestinian people, future or planned activities of the agencies should be grouped thematically into three categories: (a) development activities, (b) education and training and (c) health. Information on current activities would, as in previous reports, be presented organization by organization.

## II. CONCLUSIONS OF THE MEETING

9. It was recognized by the participants that the meeting provided a useful forum to assess progress in economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people and to explore ways and means of enhancing such assistance. The meeting also noted that organs and organizations of the United Nations system continued to provide economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people in accordance with their respective mandates. While the meeting noted that some progress had been made towards the development of the co-ordinated programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people in response to General Assembly resolutions 38/145 and 39/224 and that the report of the Secretary-General on assistance to the Palestinian people (A/40/353-E/1985/115 and corrigendum) represented a modest advance in this direction, it was felt that the proposals before the meeting did not at this stage constitute a co-ordinated programme in its final form as envisaged in the General Assembly resolutions. The meeting noted that, given the complexity of the issues and circumstances involved, it was difficult at this stage to provide specific information on all aspects of the activities, with a detailed assessment of financial requirements. The provision of fuller information on proposed or planned activities for the future in a thematic framework was seen as an effort to move further towards developing a co-ordinated programme.

10. The meeting discussed in some detail the activities currently carried out by the United Nations system as reflected in chapter II of the report of the Secretary-General (A/40/353-E/1985/115 and corrigendum), and of the future and proposed activities of the organizations, as contained in chapter III of the above-mentioned report. The representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization sought clarifications and explanations on specific activities to which responses were provided by the concerned organizations of the United Nations system. The meeting also heard statements by representatives of some of the Arab host countries, and by the representatives of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations which were present at the meeting. It noted that attendance by intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations remained inadequate.

11. In conclusion, the meeting was of the view that (a) there is a need to ensure continuing review of the progress made in the implementation of the activities and programmes contained in the report of the Secretary-General (A/40/353-E/1985/115 and corrigendum) and (b) further efforts need to be made to finalize the programme of assistance as envisaged in General Assembly resolutions 38/145 and 39/224.

## III. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PROVIDED BY UNITED NATIONS BODIES AND THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES

12. Additional information updating the information contained in the report of the Secretary-General (A/40/353-E/1985/115 and corrigendum) was provided by a number of organizations. This information is set out below.

F. World Health Organization

23. There is steady progress in the development of health centres in the occupied territories. Two such centres are formally designated as World Health Organization (WHO) Collaborating Centres in Primary Health Care. Work is under way at the first of these centres, the Health Service Research Centre at Ramallah. The full responsibility for technical supervision of the primary health care research work which will be undertaken at each centre will rest with WHO. The overall objective of the work will be to support the undertaking of health systems research aimed at total coverage of the local population with primary health care, using the most appropriate technology.

24. At Ramallah, where specific research projects are now getting under way, these projects will include an evaluation of a plan for expanded primary health care in the villages of the area; evaluative studies of the practices and outcomes of the work of traditional birth attendants as a component of primary health care; continuation of previous studies of growth and development of infants and children; evaluative studies on the effects of the intensive programme of immunization against tetanus neonatorum and adult tetanus; evaluation of the routine immunization programme for the prevention of rubella; a study to assess the utilization and impact of oral rehydration therapy in primary health care and in hospital centres; basic epidemiological studies of acute respiratory diseases and of villages in the area, in the epidemiology of hepatitis and of brucellosis, as well as studies related to nutrition, breast-feeding and anaemia.

25. The second centre to be designated as a WHO Collaborating Centre is the Epidemiology and Health Information Centre of the Health Services of Gaza. It is anticipated that a costed work plan to enable specific activities to get under way at Gaza will be presented to the authorities concerned in the very near future.

26. It is anticipated that a third centre, whose focus will primarily be on health manpower research in relation to primary health care, will be designated at an early date.

Notes

1/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Fortieth session, Supplement No. 8 (A/40/8), annex I.

2/ For the report of the thirty-second session of the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme, see Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1985, Supplement No. 11 (E/1985/32).

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THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO  
COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES BY  
THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THE  
INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS  
ASSOCIATED WITH THE UNITED NATIONS

Assistance to the Palestinian people

Report of the Secretary-General

Corrigendum

Page 1, paragraph 1, fifth line

Item (b) should read

(b) to convene in 1985 a meeting of the relevant programmes, organizations, agencies, funds and organs of the United Nations system to consider the co-ordinated programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people;

Page 4

Subtitle preceding paragraph 14 should read Paragraph 93

\* A/40/150.

\*\* E/1985/100.

Page 5, paragraph 19

The second sentence should read:

"The Governing Council expressed its gratitude to those Governments and funds which have responded generously to its appeals and to those of the General Assembly for additional special contributions to the third programming cycle (1982-1985).

Page 6, paragraph 24

24. At Ramallah, where specific research projects are now getting under way, these projects will include an evaluation of a plan for expanded primary health care in the villages of the area; evaluative studies of the practices and outcomes of the work of traditional birth attendants as a component of primary health care; continuation of previous studies of growth and development of infants and children; evaluative studies on the effects of the intensive programme of immunization against tetanus neonatorum and adult tetanus; evaluation of the routine immunization programme for the prevention of rubella; a study to assess the utilization and impact of oral rehydration therapy in primary health care and in hospital centres; basic epidemiological studies of acute respiratory diseases and further studies related to the prevalence of lead intoxication in a number of villages in the area, in the epidemiology of hepatitis and of brucellosis, as well as studies related to nutrition, breast-feeding and anaemia.

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AGENCIES AND THE INTERNATIONAL  
INSTITUTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH  
THE UNITED NATIONS

Assistance to the Palestinian people

Report of the Secretary-General

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\* A/41/50/Rev.1.

\*\* E/1986/100.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. In resolution 40/170 on assistance to the Palestinian people, adopted on 17 December 1985, the General Assembly, inter alia, requested the Secretary-General to review the progress made in the implementation of the proposed activities and projects described in his previous report (A/40/353-E/1985/115/Corr.1 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1) and to take all necessary steps to finalize the programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people. The Assembly also requested the relevant programmes, organizations, agencies, funds and organs of the United Nations system to intensify their efforts, in co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), to provide economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, and further requested that United Nations assistance to the Palestinians in the Arab host countries should be rendered in co-operation with the PLO and with the consent of the Arab host Government concerned. The Assembly further requested the Secretary-General to convene in 1986 a meeting of the relevant agencies and organizations of the United Nations system to consider economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, and to provide for the participation therein of the PLO, the Arab host countries and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. Finally, it requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its forty-first session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution.

2. The present report has been prepared pursuant to that resolution and contains information provided by agencies and organizations of the United Nations system. The information is presented by organization and covers their current and proposed activities in the field of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people. Some activities, such as events organized on the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, are not included.

3. It is envisaged that the meeting called for under the resolution to consider economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people will take place at Geneva at the beginning of July 1986. The Secretary-General will report thereon to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly.

4. Any additional information received from organizations at a later stage will be issued as an addendum to the present report.

## II. ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

### A. United Nations

#### 1. United Nations Development Programme

5. The Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People, authorized on an experimental basis by the General Assembly in resolution 33/147, of 20 December 1978, commenced operational activities soon after the UNDP Governing Council approved the initial financing, management and operational proposals of the Administrator at its twenty-seventh session in June 1980. 1/

6. By the end of the second programming cycle (1976-1981), it had become evident that meaningful assistance could, in fact, be delivered expeditiously and effectively by UNDP for the benefit of the local Palestinian inhabitants of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Project planning and delivery accelerated rapidly in spite of the unprecedented circumstances which required the exercise of unusual flexibility and often called for a departure from normal UNDP policies and practices. The requirement of the General Assembly and the Governing Council that all project activities be subjected to prior consultation with the parties directly concerned proved to be an essential ingredient for success, in spite of the arduous and time-consuming aspects of such a complex process.

7. During five years of the third programming cycle (1982-1986) the Programme has consolidated its early gains. Since 1980, the following nine projects, costing over \$2.5 million, have been completed:

	<u>United States dollars</u>	
PAL/79/002 - Specialized training in industrial management	103 888	
PAL/79/003 - Promotion of pre-primary education	255 460	
PAL/79/005 - Promotion of technical and vocational education	377 222	
PAL/79/008 - Development and strengthening of health institutions I	619 220	
PAL/79/009 - Specialized training programme in agricultural development	173 664	
PAL/79/014 - Training in housing	57 856	
PAL/79/018 - Children's institutions	431 088	
PAL/83/002 - Medical Services Training Centre (to be reactivated when financing is secured)	155 307	
PAL/83/006 - Development of health institutions II	393 977	<u>2 567 682</u>

The following 14 projects are currently under implementation at a total cost of about \$7 million:

PAL/79/001 - Identification of social and economic needs of the Palestinian people	783 455
PAL/79/007 - Health manpower development	859 891
PAL/79/010 - Agricultural Training Centres (Syrian Arab Republic) (FAO-executed)	356 000
PAL/79/013 - Development of olive oil industry	180 000
PAL/79/016 - Youth programme	69 000
PAL/79/017 - Women's institutions	200 000
PAL/83/001 - Specialized training in anaesthesiology	509 320
PAL/83/003 - Sewage disposal and effluent recycling for the town of Khan Yunis	1 070 000
PAL/83/004 - Development and strengthening of Agricultural Educational Institution at El Aroub	100 000

	<u>United States dollars</u>	
PAL/83/005 - Assistance to the fishermen in the Gaza Strip	675 000	
PAL/85/002 - Project preparation for the social and economic needs of the Palestinian people	80 000	
PAL/85/003 - Strengthening of Agriculture and Hydrology Laboratories	60 000	
PAL/85/004 - Recycling of Gaza City effluents	1 150 000	
PAI/86/001 - Strengthening of educational institutions	850 000	<u>6 942 666</u>

8. By the end of 1986, the full amount of \$9.5 million so far authorized by the Governing Council will be fully committed to specific projects.

9. Since 1980, UNDP has been a significant public source of substantial and direct economic and social development assistance for the benefit of the Palestinian inhabitants of the concerned territories.

10. A personal inspection visit by the Administrator to the area in February 1986 confirmed that all parties directly concerned, including most particularly the Palestinian inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, view the Programme as an increasingly important factor in the efforts for development and self-sufficiency in the occupied Arab territories.

11. Although it had been anticipated at the commencement of operations of the UNDP Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People that substantial support for this Programme would be forthcoming in the form of voluntary contributions from Governments and intergovernmental institutions, experience has demonstrated that funding from UNDP central resources must be viewed as the principal and only reliable financing element. In spite of repeated appeals by the Governing Council and the General Assembly for special contributions, most potential contributors have indicated their preference for arrangements whereby the financial base for the programme is a continuing allocation from Special Programme Resources.

12. In addition to the above-mentioned 14 projects at a total cost of about \$7 million to be completed by the end of 1986, a new initial group of projects costing \$17.3 million, subject to approval by the UNDP Governing Council at its thirty-third session, is contemplated for implementation in the forthcoming fourth UNDP cycle (1987-1991). The title, short description of activities and cost of each project are given below.

Notional figure  
(United States  
dollars)

Natural resources

Water supply: villages and rural areas

1 500 000

Provision of accessible and clean drinking-water supplies by the construction of water reservoirs, installation of water networks and improvement of existing wells.

Agriculture

Assistance to farmers

2 000 000

Financing of equipment and machinery for loan to small-scale farms through co-operatives; provision of seeds and fertilizers to farmers in hardship cases.

Sprinkler and drip irrigation for citrus groves - Gaza

250 000

Introduction of sprinklers and drip irrigation methods to citrus groves.

Wadi Fara's irrigation: lateral piping

250 000

Installation of lateral piping connecting the main Jiflik Canal to individual farms, as an extension of a regional project largely funded by the Arab Fund for Social and Economic Development.

Co-operative and extension training

250 000

In-service and specialized training for staff of co-operatives and extension services, as well as local community leaders.

Honey production

100 000

Feasibility study on apriary possibilities in the Gaza Strip with emphasis on commercial production of honey, pilot projects to be financed on the basis of positive indications.

Marketing of agricultural and dairy products

175 000

Feasibility study to improve the marketing aspect of vegetables, milk and citrus products with the introduction of proper packing and grading methods and facilities.

	<u>Notional figure</u> <u>(United States</u> <u>dollars)</u>
<u>Spraying campaign</u>	50 000
Provision of insecticides and equipment through co-operatives for spraying fruit trees and vegetables to control infestations.	
<u>Pilot nursery - vegetable seedlings</u>	100 000
Experimentation with nursery production of vegetable and fruit seedlings of different varieties for distribution to small-scale farmers.	
<u>Development of slaughterhouses</u>	350 000
Development of slaughterhouses in the West Bank and replacement of existing unhygienic and uneconomical facilities.	
<u>Assistance to Gaza fishermen II</u>	125 000
Surveys of fisheries production in continuation of UNDP's effort to improve the fisheries industry in the Gaza Strip.	
<u>Reforestation - West Bank</u>	100 000
Reforestation on hilly slopes and tops of mountains to prevent erosion; rejuvenation of olive tree plantations.	
<u>Industry</u>	
<u>Industrial Zone - Gaza</u>	50 000
Feasibility study on the establishment of an industrial zone to assist small-scale industries and workshops.	
<u>Specialized training in industrial management II</u>	100 000
Courses designed to provide owners, managers, accountants and other professionals with specialized training in developing and managing small- and larger-scale businesses; as in previous project, to be carried out at the ILO Turin Centre.	
<u>Citrus processing - Gaza</u>	200 000
Detailed feasibility study on establishing processing and marketing facilities (canning, juice concentrates etc.) for citrus products.	

Notional figure  
(United States  
dollars)

Health

Village clinics - West Bank

1 500 000

Establishment of 10 to 15-bed clinics in remote villages and training of local health workers to provide on-site health services.

Development of health institutions III

1 800 000

As for two previous projects, to provide urgently needed specialized medical equipment to health institutions and community health clinics.

Health manpower development II

1 250 000

Provision of short-term specialized training courses, for example ultrasound, emergency clinic, laboratory and X-Ray technicians, midwifery, intensive care nurses etc., to paramedical technicians and specialists.

Ambulance services

500 000

Establishment of emergency ambulance services staffed by qualified paramedics to cover presently unserved areas in the West Bank and Gaza areas.

Education

Assistance to higher education

300 000

Enhancement of administrative and academic development in existing universities and colleges by short-term training and exchange programmes designed to strengthen the capabilities of faculty members.

Strengthening of educational institutions II

2 000 000

An extension of a previous project, designed to improve educational facilities and alleviate overcrowding by construction of additional classrooms in congested cities as well as remote villages.

Agricultural vocational training

2 000 000

Strengthening of agricultural development through short-term training, as well as specialized skill-training programmes.

Notional figure  
(United States  
dollars)

Employment

<u>Small-scale industry</u>	100 000
Sponsorship of a feasibility study to identify small-scale business opportunities and types of retraining required to the unemployment situation.	
<u>Women's institutions II</u>	400 000
Sponsorship of a school to provide women with technical, specialized training such as home economics, nutrition, kindergarten and family life, social work, decoration and interior design, and information and publications in order to increase job opportunities and to meet demands for skilled personnel.	
<u>Promotion of technical and vocational education II</u>	500 000
Establishment of specialized courses in carpentry, electricity, and plumbing, similar to previous UNDP courses in other fields.	
<u>Glass and ceramics</u>	350 000
Upgrading of the traditional industry at Hebron, West Bank, through comprehensive training programmes and improved equipment.	

Human settlements

<u>Assistance to municipalities</u>	1 000 000
Provision of special machinery and equipment to municipalities with urgent needs not covered by other financing sources.	
Total	<u><u>17 300 000</u></u>

13. At its organizational meeting of 1986, in February 1986, the UNDP Governing Council approved an allocation from Special Programme Resources for the forthcoming fourth cycle (1987-1991) in an amount of \$8 million. In so doing, the Council noted that previous allocations had amounted to \$3.5 million for the second cycle and \$6 million for the third cycle.

14. The amount of \$8 million is viewed by the Administrator as a provisional allocation, subject to review on the basis of project expenditures experienced in the first part of the new cycle. In the event that new projects shown above and additional projects currently being formulated, can be implemented rapidly, it may

be necessary for the Council to reconsider the amount at a later session, in the light of the prevailing situation and the updated estimates of total funding available under Special Programme Resources.

2. United Nations Relief and Works Agency for  
Palestine Refugees in the Near East

15. In 1985, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) continued to provide both regular and emergency programmes of assistance to eligible registered refugees. The number of refugees registered with the Agency at 31 December 1985 amounted to 2,119,862, which represents more than half of the estimated total number of Palestinian people.

16. The Agency continued, throughout 1985, to provide three main regular programmes: education services, in co-operation with UNESCO; health services, in co-operation with WHO; and relief services. In addition, it extended emergency relief services to groups of refugees in Lebanon. The total expenditure on programmes in 1985 amounted to \$187.4 million, almost all of which was met by voluntary contributions.

17. Expenditure on education services in 1985 amounted to \$125.9 million or 67 per cent of total expenditure. In the 1984/85 school year, 345,844 children received elementary and preparatory (lower secondary) education in 640 UNRWA schools; 7,984 pupils were assisted with their secondary education at local government or private schools; some 4,322 trainees followed vocational or teacher-training courses at seven UNRWA centres; and 353 students were awarded scholarships for university study. During 1985, no funds could be allocated from the UNRWA budget for the construction of additional classrooms and other urgently required education facilities. Special donations, however, enabled the Agency to construct a limited number of schools and classrooms.

18. Health services accounted for \$38.3 million or 20.4 per cent of total expenditure. Health monitoring of children, pregnant women and nursing mothers was the major component of the health programme provided through a network of 99 health units. Children showing growth failure received special care in 64 nutrition rehabilitation clinics. Nutritional support was provided in the form of midday meals, milk and extra rations to vulnerable groups. Emphasis on the preventive aspects of oral health continued, especially among school children. Six new dental clinics were established during the year: three in the Syrian Arab Republic, and one each in Lebanon, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. The Agency also maintained 79 specialist clinics covering tuberculosis, ophthalmology, ear-nose-and-throat diseases, cardio-vascular diseases, dermatology, chest diseases, diabetes and family planning. Twenty-seven clinical laboratories attached to health units continued to perform routine and bio-chemical tests. The Agency also assisted in self-help sanitation projects carried out by the refugees for the construction of drains and pathways in camps and for the connection of sewerage systems to municipal networks.



19. The third category of service, the relief programme, involved expenditure in 1985 of \$20.5 million amounting to 10.9 per cent of total expenditure. The programme concentrated mainly on providing assistance to the most needy section of the refugee population - widows, orphans, the aged and the physically and mentally handicapped. Those persons, known as "special hardship cases", numbered 108,195 at the end of 1985. They are given dry food commodities, blankets, clothing, footwear, small cash subsidies, assistance in the repair of their shelters and assistance in becoming wholly or partially self-supporting. Economic hardship resulting from rising unemployment among refugees, especially in Lebanon, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip continues to generate pressures for special hardship assistance, a trend which seems likely to continue in 1986.

20. In 1985, the Agency was called upon once again to extend emergency assistance to refugees in Lebanon, for which a total of \$2.2 million was expended. During July and August 1985, the Agency provided emergency assistance, including food aid, to some 30,000 refugees, who had been affected by the fighting in and around the camps in Beirut. In September, similar assistance was given to about 470 families displaced as a result of the fighting in Tripoli. Cash grants were made to families in the Beirut camps to assist them in repairing their shelters. The work of repairing or replacing UNRWA schools, clinics, offices and other installations, reconstructing camp roads and drains and restoring electricity supplies damaged or destroyed during the Israeli invasion in 1982, and in subsequent fighting, continued throughout 1985.

21. UNRWA faced a grave financial crisis at the beginning of 1985. Against an estimated cash requirement of \$205.1 million to continue provision of services, the Agency estimated its cash income would be only \$118.3 million. Reductions totalling \$43 million were made in the budget by deferring improvements due in staff remuneration and much-needed construction and by cutting back administrative expenses. Donors responded generously to a special appeal for funds and the Agency was able to close the year without a major deficit.

22. The level of UNRWA financial resources is the prime determinant of its ability to meet the needs of the refugees. Given the funds, there are many projects which the Agency would implement to enhance the opportunities for refugees to become self-supporting, to improve the quality of services and to cater for the special needs of those with particular handicaps.

23. The programme activities of UNRWA to be implemented during the year 1986 includes the following:

(a) Regular programme and associated projects

24. The cost of maintaining the regular programme and associated projects in 1986 is estimated at \$186 million. Estimated income both in cash and in kind, based on pledged or expected contributions, stands at \$176 million, leaving a cash gap of some \$10 million. The Commissioner-General is actively seeking the additional funding required.

(b) New construction

25. The cost of this project is not included in the regular programme. The Agency has drawn up a three-year construction programme and has listed priority items costing \$8.1 million for initiation in 1986. The funds will be used mainly to build classrooms to avoid triple shifting, to construct new schools to replace dilapidated premises, to replace or rebuild toilet units in existing schools and to build new health clinics and sewing centres. At present, this programme remains unfunded.

(c) Special project to improve environmental health conditions

26. A number of items relating to the improvement of environmental health conditions have been put together in a package which is being presented to potential donors. The objective of this project is to improve the environmental health conditions of the refugees living in camps and to replace or renovate unsatisfactory facilities in Agency schools. This will improve cleanliness and minimize the environmental determinants of exposure to infectious disease, thus reducing morbidity and mortality associated with poor environmental conditions.

27. The total estimated cost of this project is \$4,245,000. To date, \$240,000 has been pledged. At the donor's request, this amount is to be used for the improvement of sanitary facilities in Agency schools in the Gaza Strip.

3. United Nations Children's Fund

(a) Assistance to Palestinian children and mothers in Lebanon

28. The condition of Palestinian mothers and children in Lebanon deteriorated in 1985. Despite difficult conditions, the implementation of certain activities in the 1985 Plan of Action, was still possible through a sound framework of co-operation with non-governmental organizations and Palestinian philanthropic societies that have been built up since 1983.

29. Following the 1984 armed conflicts in the camps in the Beirut area, UNICEF provided emergency and rehabilitation assistance. An allocation of \$US 70,000 was made for water and sanitation works and for procurement of surgical equipment for the paediatric ward at Gaza Hospital. This money also covered the provision of relief supplies, such as baby clothes, mattresses and kitchen equipment. The distribution of supplies was co-ordinated with a committee of 12 non-governmental organizations. A major plan, totalling \$US 310,000, for the rehabilitation of water and sanitation works in the camps of Sabra/Shatilla and Burj Al-Barajneh has been prepared.

30. The maternal and child health network and the nursing school run by the Palestinian Red Crescent Society (PRCS), the maternal ward at Gaza Hospital and the paediatric ward at Haifa Hospital are being rehabilitated. Special centres for the rehabilitation and education of the disabled were established in Beirut camps, and

a programme was prepared to introduce techniques of detecting early childhood disabilities in all ongoing training programmes for social workers, kindergarten teachers and women, sponsored by UNICEF and non-governmental organizations.

31. With regard to women's income-generating activities, UNICEF has rehabilitated an embroidery workshop for women and has provided the necessary supplies to ensure the continuity of one of the main income-generating activities that has strong marketable outlets.

32. With regard to regular activities, some progress was made in pre-primary education, where a series of parallel activities are being carried out with a view to upgrading the quality of kindergarten teachers and developing innovative ideas. UNICEF has assisted a local charitable organization in establishing a kindergarten resource centre and in training a team of 10 kindergarten teachers, who are responsible for running that centre. A consultant was also hired to develop educational games with local applicability. Those efforts culminated with a summer camp for 2,000 children, where mothers, teachers and consultants participated and health education materials and games were tested.

(b) Assistance to Palestinian children and mothers in the Syrian Arab Republic

33. In 1985, UNICEF continued to strengthen the expanded programme of immunization (EPI) activities and maternal and child health (MCH) services through support to UNRWA. The support provided has been in the form of financial assistance for the training of nurses and dayas. The training programmes were focused on oral rehydration therapy (ORT), EPI and breast-feeding. Oral rehydration salts, vaccines and vaccine-related supplies, growth charts and related communications materials were also provided. Based on the findings of a study commissioned in 1984 to investigate health, water and sanitation conditions in four refugee camps, UNICEF has, as a first step, undertaken to carry out water and sanitation works, including sewerage disposal in the refugee camp in Ramadan. The improved conditions will provide an opportunity for launching a health education campaign emphasizing hygiene and the prevention and treatment of diarrhoeal diseases. A plan to cover the water and sanitation needs in Aher camps was also finalized. A noted project in the amount of \$US 500,000 has been prepared and forwarded to potential donors for possible funding.

(c) Assistance to Palestinian children and mothers in Jordan

34. Aid to Palestinians in Jordan is mainly done through UNRWA and various non-governmental organizations. Assistance in the form of vaccines and related equipment, oral rehydration packages and project communication materials is provided to maternal and child health services established by UNRWA in one of the largest refugee camps. Those efforts are back-stopped by support to training of traditional birth attendants and midwives and close follow-up of the home-visiting programme by nurses and para-medical personnel.

35. Teachers in the UNRWA schools in Jordan are being trained in a variety of specific child survival techniques elements and sanitation. UNICEF financed the services of a consultant to promote the efficient utilization of the communication materials on ORT, EPI and breast-feeding. As a result of that consultancy, a training course for 22 health education officers was implemented. In addition, assistance is given to non-governmental organizations through promoting existing kindergartens in different camps by provision of supplies and equipment.

(d) Assistance to Palestinian children and mothers  
in the occupied Arab territories

36. Considerable progress has been made in respect of the UNICEF programme of co-operation in the West Bank and Gaza. The programme consists of three interrelated elements: primary health care, pre-school stimulation and the promotion of child development centres. It aims at promoting a cost-effective approach to the survival and development of Palestinian children and mothers through the prevention, early detection and treatment of childhood disabilities and through the development of innovative approaches to early child care.

37. The primary health care component has succeeded in training 28 village health workers in the Hebron District to undertake simple preventive, promotive and curative tasks relating to maternal and child health. The pre-school stimulation element has succeeded in renovating 25 kindergartens, all of which are run by various Palestinian charitable societies. The renovations themselves have been carried out by the Al-Bir Society in Jericho. An additional 30 sets of basic kindergarten furniture have been produced and distributed. An Arabic language teachers' manual has also been produced and is being distributed to every kinderyarten in the West Bank and Gaza.

38. The child development centre opened in Ramallah in late 1984 has been joined by a new child development centre in Hebron. A child development centre in Gaza opened in April 1986 and a fourth child development centre is to open in July in Jenin under the auspices of the Red Crescent Society. The child development centres are involved in community outreach work and operate in close co-ordination with other organizations, such as Catholic Relief Services. The child development centres also contribute to the training courses for kindergarten teachers and to testing, giving advice and referring cases of early childhood disability.

39. UNICEF has continued to support UNRWA activities in the West Bank and Gaza largely through the provision of vaccines, ORS and related supplies and equipment.

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40. During 1986, UNICEF will continue to support UNRWA activities in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip largely through the provision of vaccines and supplies needed for EPI and ORT, as well as related equipment.

#### 4. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

41. Pursuant to resolution 146 (VI) adopted by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development on 2 July 1983, 2/ the Special Economic Unit (Palestinian People) was established in the Office of the Secretary General of UNCTAD in December 1984 and the staffing of the Unit was completed in September 1985. During the period from March 1985 to February 1986 inclusive, the Unit made substantial progress, in accordance with 1984-1985 and 1986-1987 work programmes of UNCTAD, in preparing annual reports containing (a) a review and analysis of developments in the economic condition of the Palestinian people; and (b) proposals on strategies and measures for future development of the Palestinian economy and for the improvement of the economic condition of the Palestinian people. It also prepared a report on its activities until mid-1985, which was presented to the Trade and Development Board at its thirty-first session. The report, entitled "Review of the economic conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territories" (TD/B/1065), reviewed the work of the Unit and developments in the economic conditions of the occupied Palestinian territories.

42. The Unit has also developed constructive working relationships on substantive matters with other United Nations departments and agencies concerned with economic development issues in the occupied Palestinian territories, notably the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, the International Labour Organisation, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization. The staff of the Unit also undertook two field visits to the Middle East in connection with specific ongoing research projects, meeting with a large number of officials of Governments, regional and national organizations and institutions dealing with the economy of the occupied Palestinian territories.

43. The Unit will continue in-depth research and prepare its second annual report to the Trade and Development Board in 1986, which will review general economic trends and specific issues of significance to the development of the occupied Palestinian territories over the past year and the preceding period. Attention will be focused on Israeli policies affecting the economic development of the occupied Palestinian territories, in general, and sectors and issues, in particular. The research is to be completed by June 1986 and the report is to be presented to the Trade and Development Board in September 1986.

44. An in-depth study of the financial sector in the occupied Palestinian territories is under way. The study will investigate various aspects of the financial sector by focusing on Israeli policies in this field, analysing the problems encountered in the financing of overall economic development and examining prospects for policy consideration. The study is being conducted jointly with the secretariat of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Far East, which has committed both staff and resources for field surveying. Research on the study of the financial sector will be completed by July 1986 and its main findings will be submitted as a background paper, together with the annual report, to the Trade and Development Board in September 1986. The full version of the study is to be completed by the end of 1986 and published jointly by UNCTAD and the Commission early in 1987.

45. After completing the study of the financial sector, UNCTAD will commence work on a second in-depth study, which is intended to focus on the trade positions of the occupied Palestinian territories and ways of developing it. This work is projected for the period 1986-1987. Simultaneously, the Unit will begin its work on the third annual report for presentation to the Trade and Development Board in September 1987. These activities will be undertaken within the existing resources available to UNCTAD.

46. Work on the establishment of a unique data base on the economy of the occupied Palestinian territories is also under way. The data base is conceived as a three-tiered system of data classification, including a bibliography, an index and statistics. UNCTAD will investigate the possibilities and modalities of ensuring wider dissemination of this data base.

47. In the event that additional resources are forthcoming, the Unit would move further ahead in the implementation of Conference resolution 109 (V) of 1 June 1979 <sup>3/</sup> and Trade and Development Board resolution 239 (XXIII) of 9 October 1981, which called for a comprehensive and in-depth survey of the state of the economy of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories, as well as an elaborate analysis of the potentials for its development and the formulation of alternative development strategies. <sup>4/</sup> It could also initiate project proposals for more direct operational assistance aimed at developing and strengthening the Palestinian economy.

##### 5. United Nations Fund for Population Activities

48. In February 1985, UNFPA was requested to support the financing of six fellowships for personnel in institutions of higher learning in the occupied territories, for post-graduate studies in the various specializations falling within the Fund's mandate. Three of these fellowships were to be undertaken at the Cairo Demographic Centre and the other three at universities in Western countries. UNFPA has received from the Office of Palestinian Projects of UNDP a list of candidatures for the fellowships, and has issued a supplementary allocation for one fellowship to the UNDP project entitled "Teacher-Training and Higher Education", which is designed to offer the above-mentioned post-graduate studies. Further allocations for another five fellowships will be issued upon receipt of nomination documentation meeting the Fund's criteria.

##### 6. United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)

49. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 39/169 of 17 December 1984, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) organized a seminar on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories, which was held in Vienna from 25 to 29 March 1985. The General Assembly, by its resolution 40/201 of 17 December 1985, requested the Secretary-General to organize, by April 1987, a seminar on priority development projects needed for improving the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories. The United Nations Centre for Human Settlements is presently in the process of organizing this seminar.

50. Pursuant to resolution 8/9 of 8 May 1985 of the Commission on Human Settlements, 4/ the Centre prepared a study on the housing of the Palestinian population in the occupied territories. 5/ The study has, inter alia, identified several specific project proposals in the field of human settlements for implementation, subject to the agreement of the parties concerned and the availability of funds. This study, which is contained in the report of the Executive Director on "Activities of the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless in occupied Palestinian territories" (HS/C/9/6/Add.4), will be submitted to the Commission on Human Settlements at its ninth session in May 1986 for consideration.

51. The Centre has offered nine middle-level training fellowships for qualified Palestinians to be trained in various selected disciplines in the field of human settlements. A response to this offer is awaited.

#### 7. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

52. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has always extended its international protection and material assistance, when requested, to the Palestine refugees outside its area of operation. Considering the difficulties encountered by Palestinians in renewing their travel documents, the Office, jointly with UNRWA was able to arrange, with the co-operation of the Government of Lebanon, an easier procedure for the renewal and extension of travel documents issued to the Palestine refugees by the Lebanese authorities.

#### 8. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

53. Pursuant to resolution 139 (XII) of 24 April 1985 of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people under occupation, which, inter alia, calls upon the Executive Secretary of the Commission "to ensure that all available data and information relating to the occupied Palestinian territories are included in all studies and statistical abstracts issued by the Commission at the regional level", the Commission covered the occupied territories in most of the reports issued at the regional level in 1985. 6/ These include: the Statistical Abstract of the region of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia; Survey of economic and social developments in the ECWA region (E/ECWA/DPD/85/4); Industrial trends, structures and potential in the ESCWA region; the situation and outlook for meat, poultry and eggs in the ESCWA region (E/ESCWA/AGR/85/8); and mid-decade review on the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action on Science and Technology for Development (E/ECWA/DR/85/WG.3/WP.13).

54. During 1985, the Commission completed two studies related to the occupied territories, in particular, a study on Food Security in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (E/ESCWA/AGR/85/4) which was issued in 1985, jointly with the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development; and a study "Forced emigration of Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza Strip (1967-1983)", which was published in the Population Bulletin prepared by the Commission. 7/

55. The Commission also advised the Jordanian Ministry of Occupied Territories Affairs on the evaluation of industrial projects in the West Bank and Gaza.

56. Pursuant to resolution 139 (XII), the Commission is currently undertaking several studies on the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people under occupation. Thus, at the request of the PLO Central Bureau of Statistics, the Commission is planning the execution of three surveys related to the Palestinian people on (a) income and expenditure of households, (b) a fertility survey and (c) migration. Those surveys will be conducted first in the Palestine refugee camps in the Syrian Arab Republic. A mission to the Syrian Arab Republic started its work in January 1986. All the costs related to the surveys will be paid by the PLO Central Bureau of Statistics and the Commission will provide technical advice.

57. The Commission will also assist the PLO, in the form of advisory services, in the preparations for a new structural organization of the Central Bureau of Statistics.

58. In February 1986, the Commission, in co-operation with the Arab Labour Organization/Arab Employment Institutions (ALO/AEI), initiated a study on technical and vocational educational institutions in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, which aims at identifying the needs of the occupied territories in those areas and is scheduled to be completed by the end of 1986. During the second quarter of 1986, the Commission will also jointly undertake, with the ALO/AEI, a study on "Labour market developments in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip", which was recommended by the Expert Group Meeting on employment and migration policies of the Arab labour force, held in Kuwait, from 25 to 28 November 1985. It is scheduled to be completed by the first quarter of 1987. The total cost of the consultancies is \$12,000, to be shared equally by the Commission and ALO/AEI. Another study on marketing of agricultural outputs in the occupied territories will be undertaken by a consultant of the Commission in May 1986, completed by November 1986, and will be financed both by the Commission and the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development. The Commission is also participating, jointly with UNCTAD, in the preparation of a study on "The development of financial structures and activities in the occupied Palestinian territories".

#### 9. United Nations Department of International Economic and Social Affairs

59. Pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1984/18 of 24 May 1984 the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs prepared and submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women, at its thirty-first session, a report on the situation of the women and children living in the occupied Arab territories (E/CN.6/1986/7).

60. An interim report on the preparation of a comprehensive report on the situation of Palestinian women living within and outside the occupied Arab territories (E/CN.6/1986/6), called for under Council resolution 1984/18, was also submitted to the Commission at its thirty-first session. The Centre will prepare



the comprehensive report, on the basis of the outline contained in the interim report, and taking account of the Commission's resolution entitled "Palestinian women", 8/ requesting the Secretary-General to focus on the identification of the main humanitarian needs of the Palestinian women.

## 10. World Food Programme

61. The Government of Japan donated \$US 1 million as a bilateral contribution to the World Food Programme's International Emergency Food Reserve for assistance to the Palestinian refugees in Jordan. The Programme was responsible for the purchase, shipment, distribution and monitoring of this assistance.

### B. Specialized agencies

#### 1. International Labour Organisation

62. The activities of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in the field of assistance to the Palestinian people are based on a resolution adopted on 24 June 1980 by the International Labour Conference at its sixty-sixth session, in which, inter alia, the Governing Body of the International Labour Office and the Director-General were requested "to provide all types of assistance and support to Arab citizens in Palestine and the other occupied Arab territories to strengthen their economic and technical capabilities and to counteract the effects of the Israeli occupation and settlement policy". 9/

63. The latest report on the situation of workers in the occupied Arab territories was submitted by the Director-General of ILO to the International Labour Conference at its seventy-first session (June 1985). It was prepared on the basis of missions to the Arab countries directly involved and missions to Israel and the occupied territories. The report presented a series of recommendations for improving the situation, particularly in terms of employment, vocational training, working conditions, social security and trade union rights.

64. The ILO had participated in the formulation of two projects in the fields of labour and training which were to be implemented by UNDP. One, relating to the promotion of vocational and technical education, is operational. Its aim is to expand the existing vocational training facilities offered by the centres of UNRWA, government services or private institutions to enable them to meet urgent needs. The other project, for specific training to meet urgent needs in the field of industrial management, was implemented during the second half of 1984 at the ILO International Centre for Advanced Technical and Vocational Training in Turin.

65. The Director-General offered the services of ILO experts in the implementation of UNDP projects of assistance to the Palestinian people. An ILO expert in the vocational training of women was made available to UNDP to implement a project of assistance to Palestinian women's institutions. The project is designed to expand the vocational training opportunities offered by these institutions and by Palestinian community development centres. Following the formulation phase of the

project, ILO had announced its willingness to collaborate with UNDP to formulate project documents to provide assistance to Palestinian women in its area of competence, such as long-term facilities for vocational training at a higher level, promotion of vocational training courses in income-generating activities for women's organizations, and support to craft-production activities. Accordingly, the ILO expert conducted a second mission in the region and submitted to UNDP a report, which is expected to result in the organization of activities for the training of representatives of women's organizations in the region.

66. The Director-General made an additional allocation from the organization's regular budget for 1984-1985 to finance technical assistance projects for the population of the occupied territories. That allocation allowed the implementation of various activities, such as, inter alia, the provision to the International Centre for Advanced Technical and Vocational Training of nine training fellowships, which allowed Palestinians from the occupied territories to attend, in the second half of 1985, a training course in the management of training institutions.

67. In June 1985, the ILO regional adviser in the field of vocational rehabilitation for disabled persons provided technical assistance to the UNRWA Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Blind in the Gaza Strip. There will be a second mission to the region in 1986 in order to organize and conduct a training workshop, at the request of UNRWA.

68. The ILO has identified various assistance projects within its field of competence for the future. The first type relates to the training activities taking place at the Turin Centre in the field of occupational safety and hygiene, teachers' training, training for officers of co-operatives, management of vocational training institutions etc. Projects in this area are much needed in the occupied Arab territories, and ILO expects to provide the funds for several scholarships for the training of Palestinians in those areas during the biennium 1986-1987.

69. The second type of project relates to the development of co-operatives and to assistance to workers' unions and employers' organizations. The Director-General's invitation remains open to make as much use as possible of the opportunities provided by the programmes of the Turin Centre, which are likely to be of interest to a wide range of occupational categories, since they provide training opportunities for officers of trade unions, employers' organizations and co-operatives or in the technical spheres of special interest to the region.

## 2. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

70. During 1985, FAO assistance to the Palestinian people continued to be in the area of training. FAO is the executing agency of the project on agricultural training centres (PAL/79/010), the objective of which is to assist the Palestinian families of Gilline and Ramadan refugee camps in the Syrian Arab Republic to improve the production and efficiency of crop and livestock farmers and producers by providing facilities, knowledge, skills, material inputs and technical leadership for demonstration and training work. The project has a budget of \$US 356,000 provided from the UNDP programme reserve (see para. 7 above).

### 3. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

71. The assistance of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to the Palestinian people is mainly concentrated on university fellowships and the provision of educational supplies and equipment. Under its terms of co-operation with UNRWA, UNESCO has been granting fellowships to educational personnel employed by UNRWA to administer the educational programme in the Middle East. Provision is made in the programme and budget for 1986-1987 for the granting of further training fellowships for the teaching staff of the universities in the occupied Arab territories, and a special scholarship fund, to be financed by donations, for students from the occupied Arab territories is under examination by the Director-General.

### 4. World Health Organization

72. WHO provided the services of one of its field staff - a sanitary engineer - for a period of two weeks in February 1985 to review the existing environmental health facilities and programmes in the West Bank. This was followed by a two-day visit of a WHO consultant in October 1985 during which he carried out an on-site inspection of a refugee camp and its surroundings and reviewed the problems of waste-water disposal and over-flowing private cesspits in the camp.

73. Rehabilitation of disabled Palestinians is a major problem which was not seriously tackled before. The services of a WHO consultant were provided for a period of four weeks in December 1985 to carry out a survey in the West Bank and to assess the needs for rehabilitation and the capabilities of rehabilitation institutions to cope with the problem.

74. The WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean, in collaboration with the Centre for Educational Development of the University of Jordan, sponsored a Workshop on Community Needs for Health Care Delivery. Fifteen nurses from UNRWA and six from the Ministry of Health participated in the Workshop, which was held from 6 to 19 July 1985. A training course for managers of food centres and their assistants took place in the West Bank from 10 May to 28 June 1985. The course was organized and conducted by senior staff members of the Field Health Office with participation of the candidates who attended the course conducted by WHO in Amman in 1984. Ten fellowships were awarded for training in environmental health and four in public health administration.

75. In view of the steady increase in the number of children making use of the milk programme of UNRWA, the Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean contributed \$US 90,000 for the purchase of a fully automatic milk-bagging machine.

76. Following upon World Health Assembly resolutions WHA35.15 of 1982 and WHA36.27 of 1983, two centres have been designated as WHO Collaborating Centres in Primary Health Care Research, the development objective of which is to support the undertaking of health systems research aimed at ensuring total coverage of the local population with primary health care, using the most appropriate technology. At the Ramallah Health Services Research Centre on the West Bank, an active

programme of research has been in progress since June 1985. Special emphasis in the early stages of the Centre's work is being given to a number of projects, including those concerned respectively with the monitoring and evaluation of an expanded primary health care programme, the evaluation and supervision of the work of traditional birth attendants, and a review of infant and child mortality. A substantial additional programme is envisaged. At the Gaza Health Services Research Centre (formerly the Epidemiology and Health Information Centre), the projects being undertaken, all of which have been built on previous work begun prior to the official designation as a WHO Collaborating Centre, represent a move forward from previous descriptive epidemiological work to that of a more analytic nature. A computerized public health reporting system is being developed, and studies will follow in several subject areas, including the use of preventive and curative health services by children, and studies of population knowledge, attitudes and practices in health.

77. In addition to the Ramallah and Gaza Collaborating Centres in Primary Health Care Research already in action, a third centre, to be located also in Ramallah, West Bank, has been officially designated. It will focus on the health manpower development component of primary health care research, with particular reference to the planning, co-ordination, development and evaluation of manpower needs, and of pilot training programmes.

78. All three centres are headed by Arab physicians, with local staffs, and the technical supervision of the projects lies with WHO. UNDP, through its Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People, in the terms of the agreement concluded between WHO and UNDP in February 1984, undertakes the administrative management of the projects. In all three cases, the WHO input provided through UNDP is designed to provide staffing support, research, training and essential scientific and office equipment to enable the staffs of the Centres to expand their work.

79. The Collaborating Centres designation in all cases has a four-year duration. Funding in each case will be for two years in the first instance. Funds mobilized for the launching phase of the three Collaborating Centres to date are \$US 500,000 from the Director-General's development programme under the regular budget. The long-term funding of the projects will be reviewed in the coming months, but it is anticipated that a substantial proportion of necessary funds will come from extrabudgetary resources. The total rate of funding required would be at least one half million dollars per biennium for the staffing and the basic primary health care research activities of the Centres, plus a currently unpredictable amount of at least the same order to be invested in the future health services, research and development arising from needs yet to be identified.

##### 5. International Telecommunication Union

80. Identification missions in the field of telecommunications training of Palestinian technicians were carried out from March to May 1985 by an International Telecommunication Union (ITU) adviser financed by UNDP sectoral support funds. The countries visited were Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia, the Syrian Arab Republic and Oman, where discussions with the local representatives of the Palestine Liberation

Organization and national Directors-General of Telecommunications were held. As a result of those missions, a proposal on the subject was presented with a view to the creation of a training centre for Palestinian technicians in Jordan. This proposal, with a budget of approximately \$865,000, is to be submitted to UNDP for inclusion in its next programming cycle for 1987-1991.

81. The Palestine Liberation Organization has been invited to take part in all the technical seminars organized within the framework of MEDARABTEL regional project RAB/83/011 implemented by ITU. The PLO was invited to participate, as an observer, in the MEDARABTEL seminar on the integrated services digital networks, which was held in Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia, in April 1986.

#### 6. Universal Postal Union

82. The UPU is providing two fellowships for Palestinian students at the Arab Postal Faculty in Damascus: one from October 1986 to 1990, and the other from 1990 to 1994. The Arab Postal Union has been requested to designate the beneficiary for the first fellowship. The annual value of the fellowships will be 15,600 Swiss francs and the total value will be 124,800 Swiss francs.

#### 7. World Intellectual Property Organization

83. Under the World Intellectual Property Organization's training programme for 1985, a fellowship was awarded in the copyright field to one candidate selected from a group of six candidatures submitted by UNRWA. In addition, one fellowship has been awarded in the industrial property field. Two candidatures were received for the fellowship. An invitation to propose candidates for the 1986 WIPO training programme in the field of copyright and industrial property has been sent to the Commissioner-General of UNRWA, the Secretary of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Permanent Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization at Geneva.

#### 8. United Nations Industrial Development Organization

84. The Industrial Development Board, at its nineteenth session in May 1985, requested UNIDO to "identify priority projects necessary for the development of the industrial sector in the occupied Palestinian territories and ... to sustain and intensify its efforts, in co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization, in providing technical assistance to the Palestinian people". 10/

85. During 1985, UNIDO carried out the following activities in the area of technical assistance:

(a) Finalized the project on assistance to the plastic industry (\$US 17,760). The detailed report comprised an analysis of identified problems faced by this industry in the occupied Palestinian territories, and included recommendations which were submitted to the Palestine Liberation Organization;

/...

(b) Completed the feasibility study on a canning plant for citrus fruits (\$US 43,500);

(c) Completed the group training programme for Palestinians in the field of policy and consultancy activities in small-scale industrial enterprises (\$US 119,240). The programme was carried out at the ILO International Centre for Advanced Technical and Vocational Training in Turin, Italy.

All of these projects were financed from the United Nations Industrial Development Fund.

86. In 1986, UNIDO will continue to carry out the following activities:

(a) The study for the establishment of an industrial development bank (UC/PAL/85/090) for the purpose of providing capital and technical assistance to industrial enterprises, taking into consideration such studies as the "Survey of the manufacturing industry in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip" (UNIDO/10.584). The project costs \$43,505 and is expected to be finalized by the end of 1986. The source of financing of this project is the United Nations Industrial Development Fund;

(b) The study for the establishment of an industrial sea port facility in the Gaza area. Before finalizing the formulation of the project, UNIDO is awaiting the results of relevant consultations on modalities of the execution by UNIDO and the approval of the occupation authorities for the fielding of UNIDO experts in the Gaza Strip;

(c) The group training programme for Palestinians in the field of organization and management of industrial co-operatives (UC/PAL/85/133). The programme has been approved by UNIDO for financing through contributions from special-purpose donors and the amount of funds required for the project is \$109,200. The programme, which is to be implemented in co-operation with the ILO International Centre for Advanced Technical and Vocational Training in Turin, is a seven-week programme and, subject to the availability of funds, is tentatively scheduled for the period of from 20 October to 12 December 1987.

87. UNIDO is trying to identify a new source of financing to implement projects in the occupied Arab territories. It has been relying on local experts to carry out the field work, and on international consultants to analyse the information and the data and then to finalize the studies. UNIDO backstopping involves a close follow-up on the implementation and the final evaluation of the studies.

### III. CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

88. As indicated above, agencies, organs and programmes of the United Nations system, in accordance with their respective mandates, are continuing to provide economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people. While some identification of needs has been carried out, further information on needs is required, and resources need to be identified and mobilized to support proposed

project activities. For this purpose, in consultation with the relevant United Nations entities and other parties concerned, the utility and feasibility of fielding, a mission on economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people could be explored. Such an initiative could facilitate the finalization of the programme of economic and social assistance, as requested by the General Assembly in resolution 40/170.

#### Notes

1/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1980, Supplement No. 12 (E/1980/42/Rev.1), chap. II.E.

2/ See Proceedings of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, vol. I, Report and Annexes (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.83.II.D.6), part one, sect. A.

3/ See Proceedings of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Fifth Session, vol. I, Report and Annexes (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.79.II.D.14), part one, sect. A.

4/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 15 (A/36/15 and Corr.1), part three, annex 7.

5/ Ibid., Fortieth Session, Supplement No. 8 (A/40/8 and Corr.1), annex I, sect. A.2.

6/ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1985, Supplement No. 14 (E/1985/35), chap. IV.

7/ No. 27, December 1985.

8/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1986, Supplement No. 4 (E/1986/24), chap. I, sect. A, draft resolution V.

9/ International Labour Conference, Record of Proceedings, Sixty-sixth Session, "Resolution concerning the Implications of Israeli Settlements in Palestine and Other Occupied Arab Territories in Connection with the Situation of Arab Workers", p. xxxix.

10/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Fortieth Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/40/16), chap. XVI, para. 40, conclusion 1985/13.

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COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES BY THE  
SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THE  
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ASSOCIATED WITH THE  
UNITED NATIONS

Assistance to the Palestinian people

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In resolution 40/170 of 17 December 1985, the General Assembly, inter alia, requested the Secretary-General to take all necessary steps to finalize the programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people requested in Assembly resolution 38/145 of 19 December 1983, to convene in 1986 a meeting of the relevant programmes, organizations, agencies, funds and organs of the United Nations system to consider economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, and to provide for the participation in the meeting of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) the Arab host countries and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

2. Accordingly, the Secretary-General convened a meeting of programmes, organizations, agencies, funds and organs of the United Nations system that was held at Geneva on 2 July 1986. In accordance with resolution 40/170, representatives of the PLO and of the Arab host countries participated in the meeting, as did relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

\* A/41/150.

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3. Representatives of the following programmes, organizations, agencies and organs of the United Nations system attended the meeting: Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, Department of Technical Co-operation for Development and Office for Special Political Questions of the United Nations Secretariat, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, United Nations Institute for Training and Research, International Labour Organisation, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, World Health Organization, Universal Postal Union, International Telecommunication Union, International Maritime Organization and United Nations Industrial Development Organization.

4. The following intergovernmental organizations were represented: Commission of the European Communities, Organization of African Unity, OPEC Fund for International Development, Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development and Islamic Development Bank.

5. The following non-governmental organizations were represented: Women's International Democratic Federation, Middle East Council of Churches, World Federation of Trade Unions and World Peace Council.

6. The Director in the Office of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation acted as Chairman.

7. The meeting had before it the report of the Secretary-General on assistance to the Palestinian people (A/41/319-E/1986/72).

## II. CONCLUSIONS OF THE MEETING

8. The main conclusions of the meeting were as follows:

(a) The meeting recognized the serious situation of the Palestinian people and the urgency of providing increased economic and social assistance to them, as well as the important role that the United Nations system could play in that regard. It agreed that assistance channelled through the various United Nations organizations should be in accordance with their various mandates and responsibilities, and should take into account the need to respond to the requirements of the Palestinian people.

(b) The meeting noted the concerns of PLO about the development of the programme of economic and social assistance called for by the General Assembly. At the same time it recognized that there were special circumstances that impeded progress. It was considered that rather than carrying out abstract or theoretical studies, the emphasis should be on developing a more systematic programme framework within which new projects and activities could be developed in the light of a better knowledge of the needs and requirements of the Palestinian people.

(c) The meeting expressed appreciation for the activities that the organizations of the United Nations system were carrying out for the benefit of the Palestinian people. Since the inception of the programme, these activities had grown and it was expected that they would be further expanded and diversified in coming years. It was also recognized that co-ordination and self-evaluation should be improved.

(d) The meeting had a useful exchange of views concerning the possibility of sending a mission to promote the development of the programme of economic and social assistance. It was noted, inter alia, that the terms of reference of the mission would need to be carefully considered in consultation with the host Governments and the PLO. It was urged that such a mission should be launched as expeditiously as possible.

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1. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has been following up with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) the activities proposed in 1985 relating to (a) a technical meeting to address specific environmental problems confronting the Palestinian people and (b) assistance in training sanitary staff of Arab municipalities in occupied territories (see A/40/353-E/1985/115, paras. 97 and 107). The matter is now being considered by the PLO.

2. UNEP proposes the following project proposal for 1987: Training course for environmental health officers on problems of water supply, sanitation and health for the Palestinian people, to be conducted either in Jordan or the Syrian Arab Republic for the benefit of the Palestinian people in one or both countries, and if feasible in the occupied territories.

\* A/41/150.

3. The purpose of the project is as follows:

(a) To train up to 50 environmental health officers and public health officers on the problems of water supply, waste disposal and sanitation in relation to water-borne diseases and general health and the significance of such matters in the protection of surface waters and to instruct them on means to deal with such matters;

(b) To demonstrate and assess the impact of adequate, safe and convenient water-supply systems, excreta disposal and general sanitation measures constructed with community participation, carefully adapted to local conditions and including provisions for adequate and continuous maintenance both in fixed villages and in camp sites for refugee populations;

(c) To survey and assess local habits, attitudes and conditions related to human contact with infected waters and to waste and excreta disposal and the use of domestic water supply, and to determine local preferences and interests regarding improved water-supply and sanitation facilities;

(d) To develop health education activities aimed at promoting the interest, acceptance and participation of the population regarding recommendations on facilities for water supply, excreta disposal and community sanitation;

(e) To help further development of committees in refugee camps or in communities as a means of securing the collaboration of the people and the promotion of self-help systems;

(f) To prepare a restricted publication of course lectures for distribution to health officers in order to improve their knowledge of the subject.

4. The cost of this project to UNEP is estimated at \$50,000. UNEP would seek the collaboration and support of the WHO Regional Office at Alexandria, Egypt, in the implementation of the project.



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Corrigendum

1. Page 15, paragraph 44, sixth line

For Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Far East read Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

2. Page 16, paragraph 45, second line

For which is intended to focus read which will possibly focus

3. Page 16, paragraph 46, third line

For an index and read a 'research index' and

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\* A/41/150.



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1. By resolution 41/181 of 8 December 1986, the General Assembly, inter alia, welcomed the decision of the Secretary-General to send a mission to prepare the programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people requested in its resolution 38/145 and expressed its thanks to the Secretary-General for convening the meeting on assistance to the Palestinian people held at Geneva on 2 July 1986. The Assembly urged the international community, the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to disburse their aid or any other form of assistance to the occupied Palestinian territories only for the benefit of the Palestinian people and in a manner that would not serve to prolong the Israeli occupation. The Assembly requested the Secretary-General to convene in 1987 a meeting of the relevant programmes, organizations, agencies, funds and bodies of the United Nations system to consider economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people and to provide for the participation therein of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the Arab host countries and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. Finally, it requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its forty-second session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution.

\* A/42/50.

\*\* See Economic and Social Council decision 1987/108.

2. Pursuant to the request, the Secretary-General engaged as a consultant Mr. John Miles, former Director of the Liaison Office of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in New York, who was instructed to visit the headquarters of relevant agencies and programmes of the United Nations system located in Geneva, New York, Rome and Vienna in order to assist in the preparation of a draft programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people. The information gathered on that mission, which was undertaken in February 1987, was supplemented by information obtained orally and in writing from agencies and programmes that, because of financial constraints, could not be visited. The draft programme prepared by the consultant is annexed to the present report.
3. In preparing the draft programme, account was taken of the agreement reached at the meeting held at Geneva on 2 July 1986 that the programme should focus on the occupied territories.
4. It is envisaged that the meeting to consider economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people called for under General Assembly resolution 41/181 will take place at Geneva on 19 June 1987. The Secretary-General will report thereon to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly.

ANNEX

Draft programme of economic and social assistance to  
the Palestinian people

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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The task of developing a programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people is a unique one. A typical country programme of international assistance is normally based upon that country's own development plan, which provides approved guidelines, including goals and objectives, priorities (both sectoral and intrasectoral) and broad financial parameters. The total resources that can reasonably be expected to be available from within the United Nations system are also usually known. Additionally, there are established modalities for co-ordinating the implementation of the assistance programme both with the Government concerned and within the United Nations system, which contribute to the most effective use of that assistance. Procedures are also in place for monitoring and evaluating the programme as implementation proceeds. In the case of the Palestinian people, that pattern does not exist. The Palestinians are scattered throughout the region, they live under different jurisdictions, many under occupation, and they have no Government of their own.
2. These constraints are well known and need no further elaboration. Their inhibiting effect on the development and implementation of any programme of assistance, however, cannot be ignored. The fact that the present programme is to be focused on the occupied territories of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, in accordance with the views expressed at the meeting held at Geneva on 2 July 1986, while limiting the geographical area to be covered, in no way overcomes these basic problems.
3. The draft programme, as set out below, has been prepared within the context of these constraints. It suggests a practical programme of assistance over the period from 1988 to 1990 by indicating ways in which the United Nations system is responding and could respond in the future to the most pressing needs.
4. The section on objectives and priorities is based on information gathered from a variety of sources. The assessments of needs within each sector are based on this information, on studies and reports of seminars prepared and organized under the aegis of various United Nations bodies, and on information provided by the relevant organizations of the United Nations system. The individual projects have been supplied by those organizations and are set out under two headings: current and planned projects, and those suggested for the future. Where possible, the resource requirements are included along with an indication of their availability.
5. It should be noted that the United Nations system is already providing assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied territories. Since the beginning of the occupation in 1967, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has maintained and developed a substantial programme of assistance to the refugees through which it provides extensive education, health and relief services, the cost of which in 1986 amounted to \$69,326,000. In 1980, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) began a programme of economic and social assistance directed primarily towards the non-refugee population. To date, over 30 projects involving almost \$14 million

have been completed or are in the course of being implemented. Other organizations of the system have also provided assistance to the Palestinian people within the terms of their respective mandates. These include the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the Universal Postal Union (UPU), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). This existing assistance is the basis upon which a full-fledged programme may be developed. Particular needs have already been identified and projects have been mounted to provide assistance where it is most needed. Much valuable experience that has been gained in planning, developing and implementing projects in the unique environment of the occupied territories is available to be drawn upon.

6. The programme is designed to present practical and credible ways of assisting the economic and social development of the Palestinian people. It is hoped that the programme will commend itself to all concerned, in particular to the Palestinian people and to prospective donors, for without their full co-operation the programme of assistance cannot be implemented, and that it will stimulate the various bodies within the United Nations system to participate in or to increase their participation in existing and planned projects, to identify new ones and to assist in securing funding for them.

## II. PROGRAMME OF ASSISTANCE

### A. Objectives and priorities

7. A growing consensus indicates that the main issue to be addressed is the economic situation of the occupied territories and, in particular, the large numbers of Palestinian workers who find it necessary either to seek employment in Israel or to emigrate. It is therefore urged that the main objective of a development programme for the occupied territories should be to rebuild the productive base of the economy to enable it to absorb its own labour force.

8. Agreed figures are difficult to establish, but according to one source, whose figures may be taken as indicative, at the end of 1985 the Israeli economy provided employment for 89,200 workers from the occupied West Bank (excluding East Jerusalem) and the Gaza Strip or 36.8 per cent of the employed labour force of the territories. Adding an estimated 8,800 workers from East Jerusalem and an estimated 15,000 who work in Israel without formal permission, the total number of

workers from the occupied territories employed in Israel at the end of 1985 reaches 113,000. Taking into account the trend between 1981 and 1985, this figure is expected to have increased to 116,000 by the end of 1986.

9. Estimates of the additional investment required in the occupied territories over a five-year period vary considerably. One source suggests a figure of just over \$1 billion or \$200 million each year, while another suggests \$2.4 billion or \$475 million each year. Whatever the figure, the amount of investment required is formidable.

10. A number of suggestions have been made as to the criteria that should be used in selecting projects for inclusions in a programme of assistance. The most pertinent of these are the following:

(a) Productivity (projects should be productive and self-sustaining and should contribute to development);

(b) Absorption of surplus agricultural output, especially through the establishment of agro-industries;

(c) Contribution to import substitution;

(d) Complementarity (projects should complement one another and not create imbalances in the economy);

(e) Geographical spread (projects should be located in areas where resources are available);

(f) Labour absorptive capacity.

11. Suggestions have also been made as to the broad categories of projects as well as specific projects that should be included in a programme. In this connection, it will be recalled that the General Assembly, in its resolution 40/169 of 17 December 1985, called for the establishment of a seaport at Gaza and of a cement plant. Suggested economic development projects include a fisheries port; agro-industrial plants for processing such products as citrus, grapes, dairy products, pickled fruits and vegetables and soap; small-scale factories that would be labour-intensive and require limited capitalization for such products as ceramics, blankets, cardboard boxes and paint; and production and training centres for tourism, textiles, electronics and shoes and leather. Other suggestions include detailed, in-depth evaluation studies of infrastructural needs such as transport, electricity and services of all kinds. In the social field, projects have been proposed that would provide for the expansion of existing educational institutions, especially for vocational training institutions and for the universities, as well as for detailed studies of health services with particular reference to the need for more hospitals and clinics.

12. A seminar sponsored by Habitat, held at Vienna from 2 to 6 March 1987, considered priority development projects needed for improving the living conditions

of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories. The seminar agreed upon a set of criteria for projects that is similar to those set out in paragraph 10 above, and proposed the following projects: an Arab cement company in the West Bank; a seaport in Gaza; a co-operative factory to process selected local fruits and vegetables; a marketing agency for Palestinian agricultural products; a training and production centre for arts and crafts; a production and training centre for textiles and ready-made garments; a ceramics factory in Hebron; a sardine canning factory in Gaza; development of sheep stocks and training of farmers; the establishment of a poultry hatchery; the propagation and use of jojoba; the satisfaction of housing needs; the satisfaction of the energy needs of rural communities; the organization and provision of an inexpensive transport network as a co-operative venture; the improvement of the road network; and water utilization (see A/42/183-E/1987/53).

13. Before these projects can be offered to prospective donors, detailed and in-depth feasibility studies need to be carried out on the spot to ensure that they will be viable and that they fit into the overall objectives of the programme.

#### B. Research, analysis and organization of data

14. One consequence of the absence of a Palestinian central authority in the occupied territories is the lack of institutional arrangements for the development of policy and planning in the economic and social fields. Likewise no central body exists in the territories for collecting and publishing statistical and other data or for producing studies and analyses upon which policy and plans should be based. The United Nations system is providing assistance in this area and can continue to do so.

##### 1. Current projects

###### (a) UNCTAD (funded)

15. In accordance with its mandate, UNCTAD, through its Special Economic Unit (Palestinian People), has prepared reports containing a review and analysis of developments in the economic conditions of the Palestinian people and proposals on strategies and measures for future development of the Palestinian economy. Between March 1986 and February 1987, the work of the Unit included the following:

(a) Submission of the 1986 annual report to the thirty-third session of the Trade and Development Board (TDB), entitled, "Recent economic developments in the occupied Palestinian territories" (TD/B/1102), which includes an analysis of aggregate economic performance in the territories, focusing on the growth of national income in recent years and development trends in major economic sectors covering trade, labour, agriculture and industry. The report also examines Israeli policies towards the economic development of the territories and the critical economic problems confronting the Gaza Strip;

(b) Submission of an annual report entitled "Selected statistical series on the economy of the occupied Palestinian territories (West Bank and Gaza Strip)" (UNCTAD/ST/SEU/1), which contains the first of a selected series of statistics compiled on various sectors of the economy of the territories as part of the data base of the Unit;

(c) Submission of an annual report entitled "Select chronology of economic issues and related activities in the occupied Palestinian territories (West Bank and Gaza Strip) 1985-1986" (UNCTAD/ST/SEU/2), which includes extracts from the data base of the Unit on current economic issues and Israeli practices pertaining to the territories, drawn from a chronology of monitored economic practices and issues as portrayed in various sources during the period;

(d) Completion in March 1987 of an in-depth study of the financial sector in the occupied territories, conducted in collaboration with the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia secretariat. The study investigates various aspects of the financial sector by focusing on Israeli policies in this field, analysing the problems encountered by Palestinians in the financing of current economic activities and future development, and examining prospects for policy consideration. This study will be published jointly by UNCTAD and ESCWA in 1987;

(e) Expansion of the Unit's data base on the territories' economy, including the regular revision and updating of a statistical series, a research reference index and a bibliography. New extracts to be published from the data base during 1987 include a statistical series, a chronology of current economic issues and a bibliography of reference material on the Palestinian economy;

(f) Development of its working relations on substantive matters with other United Nations bodies, including ESCWA, ILO, Habitat and UNIDO. The Unit has also developed constructive relations with Palestinian research and academic institutions in the territories while also striving to further build similar relations with the parties concerned.

## 2. Planned projects (funded)

16. According to the proposed work programme of UNCTAD for 1988-1989, the Unit will:

(a) Prepare annual reports for presentation to TDB on developments in the economic conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories;

(b) Report annually to TDB on studies and surveys covering sectoral and intersectoral issues, policies and strategies for the development of the Palestinian economy. The first of these studies will focus on conditions, issues, problems and proposals for improvements in the territories' trade and services sector. A second study will examine alternative development strategies appropriate to the territories and the prerequisites and modalities for their implementation;

(c) Develop the data base of the Unit through updating, expanding and processing of quantitative and qualitative data on the Palestinian economy, including publication and dissemination of the statistical series and research abstracts.

### 3. Projects suggested for the future (unfunded)

17. UNCTAD believes that there is a growing need for strengthening local institutional capabilities in (a) collection, analysis and dissemination of quantitative and qualitative information pertaining to trade and related services in the occupied territories with the view to improving the performance of their commodity and services sectors, and (b) development and application of appropriate criteria, methodologies and procedures involved in the selection, preparation, analysis and implementation of investment projects, thus contributing to better resource allocation and management. One way to deal effectively with both issues is to develop existing relevant institutional facilities in the occupied territories, perhaps through two technical assistance projects. Subject to the concurrence of the parties directly concerned, UNCTAD could assist in the design and development of the projects.

#### C. Infrastructure

18. UNDP officials on-the-spot and other observers have drawn attention to deficiencies in the infrastructure of the occupied territories that inhibit economic and social development. Some of these, such as the inability of the municipal and other authorities to provide an adequate range of services and the poor state of rural roads, adversely affect economic development. Others, such as the deficiencies in the arrangements for disposal of sewage and other effluents and the need to improve water supply systems to rural villages, pose serious health problems. The situation in the Gaza Strip is of particular concern. At present demographic rates, the population of half a million is expected to double by the year 2000. In the whole Strip, there is only one sewage disposal system (Gaza City) and it is incomplete. Exposed and resurfacing sewage is an immediate health hazard and leakage into the aquifers, already over-pumped and increasingly saline, further endangers the water supply.

19. Most infrastructural projects are exceedingly costly and can be considered only if special financial arrangements can be assured. Because of the urgency of the problem, UNDP has engaged consultants who have developed plans that keep costs to a minimum.

1. Current and planned projects (all projects are funded; costs are for the UNDP 1987-1991 cycle)

(a) Recycling of Gaza City effluents (UNDP, \$1,520,000)

20. This project involves the addition of a third treatment lagoon that will permit an existing sewer main serving the western side of the city to be connected to the system, construction of a storage reservoir for treated water and development of facilities to enable the treated water to be used for irrigation and for replenishing the aquifers through percolation pools. Upon completion of this project, the system should be adequate into the 1990s.

(b) Sewage disposal and effluent recycling for the northern region of the Gaza Strip, (UNDP, \$3,070,000, including \$2,000,000 from special contributions) 1/

21. This project represents the implementation of the first stage of a plan developed by UNDP consultants to address the short-range and long-range problems of effluent disposal in areas outside Gaza City. The following priorities were set under the plan:

1. Northern region (Jabalia, Beit Lahia, Beit Hanoun);
2. Southern region (Rafah);
3. Southern region (Khan Younis);
4. Central region (Deir el Balah).

22. The project will eliminate open standing sewage, uncovered sewage canals, resurfacing sewage and seepage into ground water. It will provide covered connection lines, new pumping stations and other facilities needed for treating and recycling the effluent for irrigation or for replenishing the aquifers.

(c) Strengthening the Gaza Hydrology Laboratory (UNDP, \$60,000) 1/

23. The Gaza Hydrology Institute will be provided with new equipment and its staff will be given additional training to enable it to increase the range and number of tests it carries out on water from the aquifers.

(d) Assistance to municipal services (UNDP, \$292,000)

24. A 25-unit commercial centre will be constructed in Rafah, Gaza Strip, and special equipment will be purchased for the Nablus municipality in the West Bank.

(e) Improvement of water-supply systems in villages and rural areas (UNDP, \$868,000)

25. Accessible and clean drinking water will be provided to 22 West Bank villages through the construction of reservoirs and the installation and repair of pipelines.

(f) Training of manpower for future needs (IMO, WMO, WIPO, UPU)

26. Specialized agencies such as IMO, WMO, WIPO and UPU have provided or are providing fellowships within their respective fields of competence for qualified Palestinians. The IMO fellowships are tenable at the Arab Maritime Transport Academy (AMTA), Sharjah, which provides training for sea-farers and shore-based maritime personnel. A current project, a manpower survey of maritime training needs in the Arab States, will endeavour to determine the number of maritime personnel that various countries will require for their merchant and fishing fleets, for maritime administrations and for ports and ancillary shore-based industries. It is expected that the survey will reflect the requirements of the Palestinians. WMO assistance took the form of a hydrological training workshop that was held at Damascus in 1986. WIPO has funded fellowships for Palestinians in the field of copyright and industrial property. UPU is financing from its special fund two four-year training fellowships for Palestinians at the Arab Faculty of Posts, Damascus. The first fellowship is tenable from 1986 to 1990; the second from 1990 to 1994. The total UPU contribution is estimated at SF 124,800.

2. Projects suggested for the future

27. The following projects are unfunded, cost figures are notional:

(a) Improvement of water-supply systems in villages and rural areas - West Bank (UNDP, \$3,000,000): UNDP has initiated projects in 22 villages but over 100 villages in the West Bank require assistance urgently;

(b) Drinking water facilities (UNDP, \$300,000): because the water supply in Gaza is diminishing and available water contains high levels of salt and chloride, pre-feasibility and feasibility studies are proposed to examine methods for conserving and treating water and to explore new sources;

(c) Industrial zone, Gaza (UNDP, \$2,500,000): feasibility study on the establishment of an industrial zone to assist small-scale industries and workshops;

(d) Assistance to municipalities (UNDP, \$3,000,000): provision of special machinery and equipment to municipalities;

(e) Development of slaughterhouses (UNDP, \$3,000,000): for new slaughterhouses and to replace existing unhygienic and uneconomic facilities in the West Bank; 1/

(f) Development of commercial centres (UNDP, \$2,000,000): construction of commercial centres for rural businesses and shops;

(g) Construction of sewage systems (UNDP, \$20,000,000): construction of systems in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to eliminate environmental pollution in and around centres of population and to provide additional water for irrigation;



(h) Training of manpower for future needs (WMO): provided funds could be found and suitable candidates identified, WMO would organize group training or fellowships in meteorology, hydrology and water resources, agro-meteorology of semi-arid areas and desertification, solar and wind assessments and urban and environmental-related climatology;

(i) Training for future needs (ITU): creation of a telecommunications training institute or centre for Palestine refugees in one of the host countries. The proposal, first made in 1979, and renewed in 1984 and 1985, could be developed, provided an official request is received from the PLO.

#### D. Agriculture (including animal husbandry and fisheries)

28. Although the value of agricultural production has declined in recent years, agriculture still plays a central role in the economy of the occupied territories. In 1984, the latest year for which figures are available, it contributed 28 per cent to the gross domestic product and provided employment for 24.8 per cent of the labour force working in the occupied territories. There seems to be agreement among observers that the difficulties faced by producers in the agricultural sector can be attributed, in the main, to Israeli policies and therefore cannot be overcome by their own efforts. It is quite clear, however, that agricultural production could be considerably increased and provide a living for a greater number of Palestinians through basic improvements in production and marketing practices.

29. The United Nations system has had wide experience in providing this kind of assistance to agricultural producers facing similar difficulties in other parts of the world and is well-equipped to furnish similar assistance to the Palestinians. Since 1979, the World Food Council has been promoting integrated national food strategies and the dissemination of information on food-sector planning and programming across developing countries. According to the Council, moving Palestine's agriculture to higher levels of output and productivity is the first task and activities could be identified and quickly developed that would promote such social objectives as employment generation, income enhancement and improved nutrition of the poor. Such activities would lend themselves to national, regional and international co-operation and would enhance improved complementarity and efficiency in co-ordinating policies and programmes in support of the Palestinian people. UNDP has provided 20 fellowships for training in irrigation, management, marketing, plant virology, animal husbandry, extension services, vegetable growing, plant protection and citrus and olive tree cultivation. FAO has also provided three fellowships, one each in animal husbandry, soil science and plant protection. UNDP has also engaged consultants to advise on needs and projects.

1. Current and planned projects (all projects are funded; UNDP cost figures are for the 1987-1991 cycle)

(a) Specialized training (FAO, \$30,000)

30. Three fellowships have been provided to university graduates for study abroad in agricultural economics and animal production. To date, two candidates have been accepted.

(b) Development and strengthening of El Aroub Community College, West Bank (UNDP, \$100,000) 2/

31. The El Aroub Community College is the only higher agricultural education institution still functioning in the territories and provides academic and practical training for 55 students. Assistance consists of provision of books and specialized equipment.

(c) Assistance to fishermen in the Gaza Strip (UNDP, \$725,000) 2/

32. This represents the first stage in a plan to meet the most pressing needs of the Gaza fishermen, namely, refrigeration on boats, cold storage on shore, a convenient fish market, and a port. The project includes financing of an ice-block factory (\$175,000), a refrigerated storage unit, offices for the fishing co-operative, a modern fish market (\$200,000) and a feasibility study on the construction of a harbour for the fishing fleet. Actual construction of the port will depend on the availability of substantial funds.

(d) Marketing of agricultural products (ESCWA)

33. A study on this subject is expected to be completed in March 1987.

2. Projects suggested for the future

34. The following projects are unfunded; cost figures are notional:

(a) Sprinkler and drip irrigation for citrus groves, Gaza Strip (UNDP, \$250,000): introduction of sprinklers and drip-irrigation methods to citrus groves in order to conserve diminishing supplies of water; 2/

(b) Pilot nursery - fruit and vegetable seedlings (UNDP, \$100,000): experimentation with nursery production of vegetable and fruit seedlings for distribution to small-scale farmers; 2/

(c) Irrigation of Auja area (UNDP, \$150,000): development of the Auja spring and construction of distribution systems for the irrigation of 6,000 dunums; 2/

(d) Irrigation of Jiflik area (UNDP, \$100,000): rehabilitation of an artesian well in the Jiflik area to permit the irrigation of 700 dunums of land for the cultivation of citrus and vegetables; 2/

(e) Wadi Fara'a irrigation (UNDP, \$250,000): installation of lateral piping connecting the main Jiflik canal to individual farms; 2/

(f) Bee-keeping (pilot apiaries) (UNDP, \$50,000): feasibility study on bee-keeping in the Gaza Strip with emphasis on commercial production of honey; pilot projects to be financed on the basis of positive indications; 2/

(g) Development of poultry farming (pilot project) (UNDP, \$100,000): experimentation with poultry production, setting up of a 10,000 unit pilot poultry farm in the Gaza Strip; 2/

(h) Sheep development (pilot project) (UNDP, \$400,000): development of sheep-breeding techniques and exploration of production and marketing;

(i) Breeding of cows and marketing of dairy products (UNDP \$500,000): introduction of modern methods for breeding cows and development of production and marketing of dairy products; 2/

(j) Fisheries development - West Bank (UNDP, \$200,000): development of a fisheries industry in the West Bank by means of aquaculture; pre-feasibility study and feasibility studies to determine viability; 2/

(k) Development of rain-fed cultivation including reforestation (UNDP, \$400,000): assistance to West Bank farmers in improving rain-fed cultivation to reforest hilly slopes and tops of mountains to prevent erosion; 2/

(l) College of agriculture, Hebron University (UNDP, \$500,000): development and establishment of a college of agriculture attached to the University of Hebron, the first in the territories; 2/

(m) Improvement of packing, grading and storage methods and facilities (UNDP, \$250,000): feasibility studies to improve the marketing of vegetables, milk and citrus products by the introduction of modern packing, grading and storage methods and facilities; 2/

(n) Improvement of the efficiency of co-operative marketing (ILO/UNDP, \$250,000 over two years): provision of efficient marketing systems for agricultural co-operatives through the development of a market intelligence system as well as of a training and consultancy unit; 2/

(o) Agricultural planning and development (ESCWA): assistance with projects related to agricultural planning and development; 2/

(p) Marketing of agricultural products (ESCWA): preparation of further studies on the improvement of marketing of agricultural products. 2/

## E. Industry

35. In 1984 industrial activities accounted for 7 per cent of the gross domestic product and provided employment for 16 per cent of the labour force working in the territories. Industry in the territories has not altered greatly in recent years and consists of labour-intensive small-scale production units with a low level of output. The main industrial products are olive oil and soap, margarine, food and beverages, plastics and rubber, textiles, leather goods, carpentry and quarried stone. Production is largely for the local market although some products are sub-contracted by Israeli factories and some are exported to Jordan. In general, industry in the territories cannot compete successfully with Israeli products.

36. The expansion of the industrial sector depends primarily on a change in Israeli policies that at present make it almost impossible for additional or new products to find a market. For that reason assistance has had to be limited to training and to a search for areas of industrial production that have a good chance of becoming viable in the present circumstances. Initial efforts have focused on existing industries, e.g., glass-making, which can make use of raw materials already at hand, and agro-industries such as food processing.

37. In 1980, UNIDO completed a survey of the manufacturing industry in the occupied territories that was later considered by an expert group. The report of this group and the survey highlighted the problems and proposed strategies. UNIDO subsequently implemented a number of projects.

38. Early in their operations in the occupied territories, UNDP consultants, some of whom were supplied by ILO, identified the need to strengthen the managerial skills of small entrepreneurs, as well as the practical value of such training. Therefore, in co-operation with ILO, UNDP financed a special course of training in industrial management that was attended by 20 owner-managers at the ILO International Centre for Advanced Technical and Vocational Training at Turin, Italy. These courses are continuing. Other courses at Turin sponsored jointly by UNDP and ILO, but funded by ILO, include courses in small-scale industrial enterprises and the management of industrial co-operatives.

1. Current and planned projects (all projects are funded; cost figures for UNDP and ILO are for the UNDP 1987-1991 cycle; UNIDO projects are funded from the United Nations Industrial Development Fund)

(a) Industrial development (olive oil) (UNDP, \$330,000)

39. The olive oil industry is already well established in the territories, with its main production centre at Nablus. Because high quality olive oil can command higher prices and has a better chance of competing on the market, UNDP has financed the construction and equipment of a laboratory at Nablus in collaboration with a major local co-operative to carry out research for the improvement of the quality of the oil produced. UNDP has also set standards and has negotiated the acceptance of these standards with the main importers of West Bank olive oil.

(b) Development of glass and ceramics engineering technology (UNDP, \$350,000)

40. The glass and ceramics industry is well established in the Hebron area but, if it is to expand and compete, it needs to take advantage of recent technological advances. To this end, UNDP is providing assistance to the recently opened Department of Glass and Ceramics in the Hebron Technical Engineering College through the provision of equipment and machinery and supplies needed for a two-year period. UNDP is also granting fellowships and financing short-term training courses to improve workers' skills.

(c) Assistance to the plastics industry (UNIDO, \$17,670)

41. A detailed study has been prepared that comprises an analysis of identified problems faced by the plastics industry in the occupied territories and a set of recommendations to improve the situation with particular emphasis on capacity utilization. The study identified two major areas where further assistance merits consideration, namely, training of Palestinians from small plastics-processing enterprises and the establishment of a plastics-testing laboratory in the occupied territories.

(d) Feasibility study on a canning plant for citrus fruits (UNIDO, \$43,505)

42. A pre-feasibility study for processing of citrus fruits has been completed and a draft report is being reviewed by the relevant substantive section of UNIDO.

(e) Study for the establishment of an industrial development bank (UNIDO, \$35,000)

43. The project has been completed and it is hoped it will be implemented in 1987.

(f) Group training programme for Palestinians in the field of policy and consultancy activities in small-scale industrial enterprises (UNIDO, \$119,143)

44. This programme, held at the International Centre for Advanced Technical and Vocational Training, was completed in December 1985.

(g) Study in respect of an industrial seaport facility in the Gaza area (UNIDO)

45. Certain preliminary information and statistical data have to be obtained in order to formulate a project concept for a study to be carried out in connection with specific industrial functions and engineering infrastructure for a seaport facility. In view of the fact that a study on a fishing port has been carried out by another United Nations body, in the same area, further action will await the result of that study.

(h) Group training programme for Palestinians in the organization and management of industrial co-operatives (UNIDO \$116,143)

46. This project was cleared for financing from the Development Fund in 1985, but was not implemented for scarcity of funds. A reduction in the total cost was

considered to allow the use of the General Purpose Funds (UNIDF) for implementation at the International Centre for Advanced Technical and Vocational Training. Negotiations on the subject with the Centre have been under way.

## 2. Projects suggested for the future

47. The following projects are unfunded; cost figures are notional:

- (a) Specialized training in industrial management (UNDP/ILO, \$250,000): continuation of existing projects to provide courses for managers, accountants and other professionals with specialized training in developing and encouraging small and medium-scale businesses, to be carried out in co-operation with ILO at Turin;
- (b) Industrial zone, Gaza Strip (UNDP, \$2,500,000): feasibility study on the establishment of an industrial zone to assist small-scale industries and workshops; ILO has expressed interest in co-operating;
- (c) Development of the manufacture of drip-irrigation equipment (UNDP, \$250,000): feasibility study to develop, manufacture and market drip-irrigation equipment;
- (d) Food processing (UNDP, \$250,000): feasibility study to establish the viability of a plant for processing and marketing fruit, vegetables, fish and meat;
- (e) Identification and development of small-scale industries (UNDP, \$2,000,000): feasibility and developmental work to establish small-scale industries;
- (f) Development of industries (UNDP, \$2,000,000): feasibility studies for establishing larger-scale manufacturing industries and processing plants for such products as plastics, wool, leather, paint and soap;
- (g) Fellowships in trade and marketing (UNDP, \$250,000): provision of training in trade and marketing;
- (h) Training of tourist guides (UNDP, \$250,000): provision of training for tourist guides through local institutions;
- (i) Hotel and tourist industry (ILO/UNDP - no figure): provision of training (project not yet formulated);
- (j) Assistance to the plastics industry - phase II (UNIDO, \$9,000): preparatory assistance to define the requirements for establishing a plastics testing laboratory in the occupied territories and to determine the exact needs and components of a training programme, as well as the most suitable institute for this purpose;

(k) Technical assistance in the identification of investment projects (UNIDO): a project is being formulated in consultation with the PLO;

(l) Industrial engineering infrastructure for a commercial port in the Gaza Strip (UNIDO, \$100,000): recommended by the fourth session of UNIDO in 1984 and requested by the PLO, this project is being held in abeyance pending the outcome of the study by UNDP on a fishing port;

(m) Small and medium-scale industries in occupied territories (UNIDO, \$80,000): recommended by UNIDO in 1984 and requested by the PLO, a study on this project is awaiting comments by the PLO on a previous industrial study for the occupied territories.

#### F. Employment

48. In addition to the need to develop agriculture and industry as a means of increasing employment opportunities in the territories, officials and consultants from UNDP and ILO have identified the need to provide training in specialized areas of employment. A 1986 UNDP/ILO project, financed by ILO, provided a training course in occupational safety and hygiene.

##### 1. Current and planned projects

49. The following projects are funded; cost figures are for the UNDP 1987-1991 cycle:

(a) Training in occupational safety and hygiene (ILO/UNDP, \$35,000): an additional six Palestinian factory inspectors will attend a course in occupational safety and hygiene at the London School of Hygiene;

(b) Trade union and workers' education (ILO/UNDP, \$95,000): provision of a course for 15 trade union educators to help them develop their capacity and skills to promote trade;

(c) Training and employment of women for a one-year assignment (ILO/UNDP, \$117,000): creation of a local post of adviser in training and employment for women to help Palestinian women's organizations and technical and educational experts to follow up and implement practical income-earning projects, and advise on project planning and on skills-training needs.

##### 2. Suggested projects for the future

50. The following projects are unfunded; cost figures are notional:

(a) Promotion of employment in the Gaza Strip, (ILO/UNDP, cost estimate not yet available): mission to analyse recent changes in the employment situation in

the Gaza Strip with a view to suggesting measures for its amelioration; subjects studied would include the scope for increased employment generation in the Gaza Strip and labour market policies;

(b) Women's institute (UNDP/ILO, \$1,000,000): sponsorship of a centre for women to provide technical, specialized training in such subjects as home economics, nutrition, kindergartens, family life and interior design; the centre would also disseminate information through publications on job opportunities, would meet demands for skilled personnel and would provide a focus for women's support groups;

(c) Upgrading and retraining professional personnel (UNDP/ILO, \$300,000): development and sponsorship of courses for retraining professional engineers and scientists;

(d) Promotion of employers' activities (ILO/UNDP, \$5,000 for each fellowship): provision of fellowships for staff members of employers' organizations for a study tour of other employers' organizations in the Arab States or in Europe.

#### G. Education and vocational training

51. There are two educational systems in the occupied territories, one in the West Bank, which follows the Jordanian curriculum, and one in the Gaza Strip, which follows the Egyptian curriculum. Within each territory, there are schools run by the Israeli authorities, UNRWA schools and private schools. UNRWA provides elementary and preparatory level education for refugee pupils as well as vocational, technical and teacher training. Refugee pupils rely for their secondary education on schools run by the Israeli authorities. The Israeli authorities and private institutions provide elementary, preparatory and secondary education as well as vocational and teacher training. Private institutions also provide pre-school education and special education for the handicapped. There are six private universities in the West Bank and one in the Gaza Strip.

52. UNRWA, UNESCO and UNDP officials, as well as other observers, have identified many deficiencies in the system. The drop-out rate is too high; schools at all levels suffer in varying degrees from a lack of special facilities such as libraries, laboratories and playgrounds; buildings are often in poor condition; many classes are overcrowded; sanitation facilities tend to be poor and pre-school education is available to only a few children. Opportunities for higher education, especially vocational and technical, are inadequate and are not always directly related to economic needs, and the educational needs of young women are not being met.

53. UNRWA has a long-standing education programme for refugee children, which it is constantly seeking to improve. It is assisted in this task by full-time experts from UNESCO, who are funded by UNESCO and who supervise the operations of the programme and advise on technical aspects, especially in vocational training. UNDP



has been providing assistance since 1980, especially to the non-refugee sector. It has concentrated on assisting pre-primary education, on constructing schools and classrooms to avoid overcrowding, and on the development of vocational training. ILO has provided experts and consultants to assist UNDP in identifying needs. UNESCO has been assisting with the development of the Palestinian open university project, presently located at Amman. Discussions are under way for the provision of technical assistance to this project.

1. Current and planned projects

(a) Elementary and preparatory school system for refugees (UNRWA, 1987: \$37,228,000; 1988: \$39,090,000; 1989: \$41,045,000; 1990: \$43,097,000)

54. UNRWA provides nine grades of education to 40,221 pupils (18,775 boys and 21,446 girls) in 98 schools in the West Bank and 86,928 pupils (45,707 boys and 41,221 girls) in 145 schools in the Gaza Strip. UNRWA trains its teachers by means of pre-service and in-service training. It also pays the teachers and other educational staff and finances, constructs and maintains school premises and classrooms. The cost, which in 1987 is estimated at \$13,416,000 in the West Bank and \$23,812,000 in the Gaza Strip, is met out of the UNRWA regular programme budget. The strategy for the next three years is to increase the number of teachers as necessary to cope with the natural increase and to ensure that classroom occupancy above 50 is eliminated wherever feasible and to increase the number of supervisory staff.

(b) Technical and vocational training system for refugees (UNRWA, 1987: \$5,637,000; 1988: \$5,913,000; 1989: \$6,209,000; 1990: \$6,520,000)

55. UNRWA operates the Kalandia Men's Vocational Training Centre, the Ramallah Women's Training Centre and the Ramallah Men's Training Centre in the West Bank and the Gaza Men's Vocational Training Centre in the Gaza Strip. A number of places in the Ramallah Training Centre are reserved for young women from Gaza. Some 2,058 trainees (1,430 men and 628 women) can be accommodated. The following two-year courses were provided in 1986-1987: metal trades (seven courses), electrical trades (three courses), building trades (four courses), commercial (two courses), paramedical (three courses), technical (five courses), three other courses and teacher training. The cost of vocational training, which in 1987 is estimated at \$4,193,000 in the West Bank and \$1,438,000 in the Gaza Strip, is covered mostly by special contributions. The range of courses provided is regularly reviewed and courses may be discontinued or introduced, according to the demands of the local economy. UNRWA maintains a placement service to assist graduates in obtaining employment.

(c) Provision of scholarships to refugee students for higher education (UNRWA, 1987: \$135,000; 1988: \$140,000; 1989: \$145,000; 1990: \$150,000)

56. A limited number of scholarships are made available to students for study in Middle East countries. In the 1986-1987 school year 50 students from the West Bank and 59 from the Gaza Strip held scholarships. The cost of the programme is paid mainly from extrabudgetary sources. In addition, the Director-General of UNESCO has endorsed a proposal to establish a special scholarship fund for students from the occupied territories and letters to that effect were sent out in December 1986 requesting voluntary contributions.

(d) Construction of new schools, additional classrooms and sanitation blocks (UNRWA, 1987: \$1,654,700; 1988: \$1,737,100; 1989: \$1,824,000; 1990: \$1,915,000)

57. Additional classrooms are needed each year to accommodate the increased number of pupils and to avoid triple-shifting (many of the Agency's schools already operate on a double-shift basis); dilapidated or unsafe buildings must be replaced and sanitation facilities need repair or replacement. Further, particularly in the West Bank, schools are accommodated in rented premises (private houses) that are unsuitable and costly and that need to be replaced by proper school buildings. Since UNRWA cannot rely on receiving sufficient financial support to meet construction costs out of its regular programme budget, it has placed them in a special section of the budget and projects are not implemented until special contributions are received. In 1986, school construction to the value of \$1,500,000 was initiated. The amount carried out between 1988 and 1990 will depend on special contributions received.

(e) Promotion of pre-primary education (UNDP, \$255,460, 1981-1986)

58. UNDP has focused its support activities on improving the quality of instruction and the facilities available in the existing pre-school institutions. It has funded supervisor posts, demonstration visits, refresher courses, the purchase of furniture and furnishings as well as of educational toys and other teaching aids.

(f) Strengthening of educational institutions (UNDP, \$1,450,000, 1987-1991)

59. UNDP has decided that the best use of the limited funds at its disposal was for the construction of schools and classrooms. Construction has been carried out for public schools, for UNRWA schools and, in one case, for a private non-profit school.

(g) Promotion of technical and vocational training (UNDP, \$377,222, 1981-1986; \$225,000, 1987-1991)

60. During the first phase of the project, UNDP financed the establishment of training centres in Nablus, Beit Jala and Hebron (West Bank) and in Gaza and Khan Younis (Gaza Strip), which provided 18-month courses for young men in radio and TV

repair and in repair of domestic appliances and 12-month courses for young women in ladies' hairdressing. Each course accommodates 18 trainees. The great majority of graduates have found employment. In the second phase, UNDP is providing assistance to two existing training institutions, one in Bethlehem (West Bank) and one in Gaza. Modern equipment is being provided to make possible training in more advanced technology such as industrial electronics (Bethlehem) and to expand an existing auto-electrical course (Gaza).

(h) Training of vocational education staff (ILO/UNDP)

61. ILO has already provided two training courses at its Turin centre, one "Training of trainers" (5 participants), the other "Management of training institutions" (10 participants). The Turin centre is available for further training courses identified as needed by ILO consultants.

(i) Assessment of vocational training needs (ILO/UNDP)

62. ILO is funding a visit to the territories in 1987 by an expert who is to formulate proposals for submission to UNDP. His terms of reference are to assess skilled manpower needs and to identify training needs in key sectors and occupational areas, to propose training programmes for meeting identified needs and to assess existing training facilities and suggest additional facilities if required.

2. Projects suggested for the future

(a) Training of teachers in computer science (UNDP, \$180,000)

63. In co-operation with UNRWA, courses are to be set up in computer science for the benefit of teachers, including UNRWA teachers.

(b) Provision of adequate technical training (UNESCO, \$1,000,000)

64. The provision of adequate technical training is one of the more urgent needs falling within the field of competence of UNESCO. UNESCO estimates that an initial outlay of \$1,000,000 would be needed to start such an institution, with an annual outlay of some \$300,000 to cover running costs. Funds for both purposes would have to come from extrabudgetary sources.

H. Health

65. Curative and preventive health services are provided in the occupied territories by the Israeli authorities, by UNRWA (to registered Palestine refugees) and by private practitioners and institutions and are delivered through a network of clinics or health centres, supplemented by both public and private hospitals. In keeping with its Agency-wide policy, UNRWA does not maintain a hospital service of its own, but subsidizes beds in existing hospitals for use by refugees needing

hospitalization. As an exception, however, it administers a tuberculosis hospital in the Gaza Strip jointly with the Public Health Department, maintains a total of 59 beds for maternity cases in six health centres in the Gaza Strip and operates a small 36-bed hospital at Qalqilia in the West Bank.

66. Following surveys carried out by international experts from WHO, working on behalf of WHO and through UNRWA and UNDP, attention has been focused on areas where improvements are urgently needed, including research and development of a primary health care system, training and continuing education of health workers at all levels, training of medical specialists, equipment and facilities at hospitals, clinics, pharmacies and laboratories, dental services, ambulance services, and the maintenance and construction of premises.

67. UNRWA provides health services for the refugees with the assistance of experts made available on a full-time basis by WHO. They supervise the operation and advise on technical matters, thus ensuring that WHO health policies are followed. This co-operation has also made possible visits by WHO consultants to evaluate and advise on specific aspects of the Agency's health services. In 1986, a WHO team carried out a survey, which included the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and concluded that UNRWA was highly efficient in making the best possible use of the limited resources available and that, unless more resources were secured, little progress could be anticipated in improving the health care of the refugees.

68. UNDP and WHO, working in close collaboration since 1980, have made substantial progress towards improving the health services available for non-refugees by concentrating on research and development for primary health care and the provision of training for health workers and of equipment for institutions.

#### 1. Current and planned projects

(a) Medical services to refugees (UNRWA, 1987: \$8,103,604; 1988: \$8,387,862; 1989: \$8,682,295; 1990: \$8,987,272)

69. In 1987, the number of refugees entitled to receive curative and preventive health services from UNRWA was 679,402, of whom 286,312 were in the West Bank and 393,090 in the Gaza Strip. UNRWA services include maternal and child health care, school health, epidemiology and communicable disease control, especially through a comprehensive immunization programme, and health education. Specialist care is provided through clinics for cardiology, ear, nose and throat diseases, tuberculosis, ophthalmology, dermatology, respiratory diseases, hypertension, diabetes, family planning and nutritional rehabilitation. The Agency also operates dental clinics and laboratory services. The Agency's objectives for this subprogramme include:

(a) Development of the primary health care system to provide acceptable standards of preventive, curative rehabilitative and supportive services to meet the basic needs of the refugee population;

(b) Improvement of the quality of patient care through upgrading the standards of diagnostic and treatment facilities in general clinics, establishing methods and procedures for monitoring the quality of care given to patients and providing health personnel with training;

(c) Modification of life-styles through health education programmes in a manner that will promote behaviour conducive to good health and the avoidance of unnecessary risks;

(d) Stimulation of community participation and strengthening intradepartmental and intersectoral co-operation.

In striving to achieve these objectives, the Agency already has an effective infectious disease control programme in place as well as a widely praised maternal and child health care system. It will continue to improve these services within available resources.

(b) Environmental health services (UNRWA, 1987: \$3,178,198; 1988: \$3,279,690; 1989: \$3,384,474; 1990: \$3,492,657)

70. UNRWA provides basic environmental health services to 332,491 refugees living in 27 camps. Of these, 92,445 refugees live in 19 camps in the West Bank and 240,046 refugees live in 8 camps in the Gaza Strip. These services, provided by Agency employees using Agency equipment, comprise the provision of adequate supplies of potable water, sanitary disposal of solid and liquid wastes, drainage of storm water and control of disease-carrying insects and rodents. In some cases, the local authorities have co-operated by constructing community water supply systems. Over the next few years, the Agency will seek to introduce measures to correct unhygienic practices, to prevent further deterioration of the situation and to protect the population from prevailing health hazards.

(c) Nutrition and supplementary feeding services (UNRWA, 1987: \$5,161,542; 1988: \$5,368,004; 1989: \$5,582,723; 1990: \$5,806,033)

71. The Agency's nutrition and supplementary feeding services provide nutritional support to vulnerable groups, namely, infants and pre-school children, pregnant women, nursing mothers and tuberculosis patients. This support is provided through (a) monthly milk distribution to children 6 to 36 months old and non-breast-fed babies under 6 months as well as to pregnant women, nursing mothers and tuberculosis patients, (b) daily mid-day meals to children up to six years of age and to older ones upon medical recommendation and (c) special extra rations to tuberculosis patients and to pregnant women from the fifth month of pregnancy and for one year after delivery. In 1986, the number of beneficiaries were as follows:

	<u>West Bank</u>	<u>Gaza Strip</u>
Mid-day meal	7,079	6,590
Milk distribution	10,507	25,112
Pregnant women and nursing mothers	6,452	12,214
Tuberculosis patients	377	87

72. Over the next three years, the Agency will seek to address the problems of underweight children and the increasing number of refugees who, because of declining economic conditions, need dietary assistance. It will do this through the identification of individuals at risk and of risk factors, followed by the implementation of corrective measures. Pilot projects for research, education and intervention will be introduced in a selected community in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

(d) Construction of health facilities and equipment (UNRWA, 1987: \$949,500; 1988: \$987,480; 1989: \$1,026,979; 1990: \$1,068,058)

73. Many UNRWA buildings date from the early 1950s and are in need of repair, extension or replacement. New equipment is also required. Construction and other capital costs are budgeted separately from the UNRWA regular programme budget and expenditure cannot begin until special contributions have been received. Of the \$204,000 budgeted for 1987, \$40,000 is for the West Bank and \$164,000 is for the Gaza Strip. Should funds be made available, they would make possible the establishment and construction of two eye clinics, the purchase of garbage collection equipment, the construction of a maternal and child health centre, and the extension of an existing health centre.

(e) Development and strengthening of health institutions (UNDP, \$1,135,630)

74. Based on the advice of consultants, UNDP decided to concentrate its resources on upgrading equipment in existing hospitals and clinics. Accordingly, it has instituted projects at a cost of over \$1 million, by which equipment was supplied to some 10 public hospitals, laboratories and training institutions in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. This project is being continued during the current five-year cycle. By continuing, systematically and according to priorities set by consultants, to provide more advanced equipment to key hospitals in the occupied territories, UNDP is making a substantial contribution towards the solution of these problems. UNDP is also ensuring that these modern services are more accessible by providing modern equipment to smaller hospitals, clinics and group practices in towns away from the city medical centres.

(f) Training of health personnel (UNDP, health manpower development: \$859,891; specialized training in anaesthesiology: \$509,320)

75. A plan was drawn up initially to establish a medical training centre that would accommodate 250 candidates - 200 in nursing and 50 in various medical specialities. In 1983, \$2 million was allocated for this purpose and an additional \$5 million was sought to cover establishment and start-up costs. Unfortunately, in

the absence of adequate supplementary funding and of agreement on details concerning the management of the centre, UNDP has had to postpone further action, although it has been providing training opportunities for medical personnel. Twenty fellowships have already been taken up. Current projects will finance two-year specialized courses for 12 doctors from the West Bank and 8 from the Gaza Strip. UNDP has also arranged two-year courses for training in anaesthesiology for 25 doctors (15 from the West Bank and 10 from the Gaza Strip).

(g) WHO collaborating centres in primary health care research (WHO/UNDP, 1984-1985: \$331,018; 1986-1987: \$231,000; 1988-1989: \$250,000)

76. Acting on a 1982 decision of the World Health Assembly and in co-operation with UNDP, WHO has designated three medical centres in the occupied territories. Based on the concept of collaborating centres, which has proved effective elsewhere, WHO has so designated the Ramallah Health Services Research Centre, the Gaza Health Services Research Centre and the Health Manpower Development Working Group at Ramallah.

77. The current priority activities of the Ramallah Health Services Research Centre include an ongoing evaluation of a programme of expanded primary health care, studies on monitoring the growth and development of children, monitoring of the immunization programme through continued serological surveys, evaluative studies on the practice and outcomes of the work of dayahs (traditional birth attendants) and a series of studies related to infant mortality and to the monitoring of child growth.

78. The Gaza Health Services Research Centre has developed into an excellent source of health information and epidemiological monitoring of the health status of the population of the Gaza Strip. It has developed both routine reporting systems and specially commissioned epidemiological and other studies, particularly related to identifying risk factors and the risk approach for developing intervention programmes. At the core of its activities for the future will be the development of a computerized public health reporting system for the area.

79. The Health Manpower Development Working Group of the Health Services of the West Bank was set up to meet the need for forward planning through 1990 of all aspects of the planning, co-ordination, development and evaluation of manpower needs. Priority is being given to the need for co-ordinated and expanded medical, nursing and paramedical manpower training and continuing education. The central focus of the Group's work will be on the projection of manpower needs, the setting of priorities for the training programmes required and the preparation of an evolving overall health manpower plan for the area. It will be responsible for developing pilot in-service continuing education programmes, a pilot orientation programme for young physicians returning to the area, and short-term intensive training programmes, including those for much needed specialist physicians, all of these to be designed with a continuing built-in system for evaluation.

80. Apart from the recognition and technical support that designation as a WHO collaborating centre implies, funds have been made available to provide staffing support, research training and essential scientific and office equipment to enable the staff of the centres to develop and expand their respective activities.

81. WHO regularly evaluates the work of these centres and has worked out detailed plans for the expansion of their activities over the next three years and the next five years. WHO is enthusiastic about the results achieved so far and sees a genuine need for their continued fundings at a rate of about \$500,000 each biennium. To date they have been funded by WHO but it is now foreseen that extrabudgetary sources will have to be sought.

(h) Health services training (WHO/UNDP)

82. Since 1984, WHO has awarded six Palestinian physicians (five from the West Bank and one from Gaza Strip) one-year fellowships for training in public health. WHO has also sponsored a health services training workshop for some 22 senior participants.

(i) Support to WHO collaborating centres for studies related to maternal health and family planning (UNFPA/WHO/UNDP, \$91,035)

83. This project, for which funding is expected from UNFPA, will be under the general direction of WHO and receive managerial support from UNDP. It is intended to provide support for those activities of the WHO collaborating centres that most closely concern maternal and child health, including family planning.

(j) Fellowships in population related studies (UNFPA/UNDP, \$133,200)

84. UNFPA is financing six post-graduate fellowships to be implemented by UNDP in population-related fields including data collection and analysis, population education, maternal and child health including family planning and population and development. Three fellowships are for study in Europe and three for study at the Cairo Demographic Centre.

(k) Training course in environmental health (UNEP, \$67,000)

85. UNEP is planning a training course on the improvement of environmental health in the refugee camps in collaboration with WHO, UNICEF and UNRWA. The course, which will be held in the area, will be attended by environmental health officers and will focus on water supply, sanitation, pollution control and sound management of environment related diseases in the Palestine refugee camps and settlements, including those in the occupied territories.



2. Projects suggested for the future (all cost figures are notional)

86. The following projects are proposed:

(a) Village clinics (UNDP, \$2,000,000): establishment of 10 to 15-bed clinics in remote villages where health services are not presently available;

(b) Ambulance services (UNDP, \$1,000,000): establishment of emergency ambulance services staffed by qualified paramedics;

(c) Development and strengthening of health institutions (UNDP, \$2,500,000): extension of existing projects to provide modern specialized medical equipment to all types of health institutions;

(d) Development of training centres for medical technicians (UNDP, \$2,500,000): expansion of existing health training centres to provide advanced training for medical technicians, specialized nurses and paramedical personnel;

(e) Medical specialization fellowships (UNDP, \$500,000): provision of further fellowships to general practitioners for specialization in medical fields where an under-supply exists.

I. Social welfare

87. Social welfare services are provided by UNRWA to the refugee population and by the Israeli authorities to non-refugees. Charitable organizations are also active in the field. The main services include assistance to the needy and to the handicapped, especially children, as well as support for community activities centres for young people and women.

88. In the experience of UNRWA, the recent decline in economic activity has led to an increasing need for assistance among the refugee population in the occupied territories. This is probably also true of the non-refugee population. Moreover, although UNRWA and local organizations do what they can to encourage the development of women's and youth groups and to provide them with facilities, much remains to be done. Special training and rehabilitation facilities for the handicapped are also few in number.

89. UNRWA has been endeavouring to meet social welfare needs of refugees since it began operations in 1950. It once provided food rations to the majority of refugees but, since the general ration distribution was discontinued in 1982, it now distributes rations only to those families that meet strict criteria and are designated as special hardship cases. It has also established and maintained youth activities and women's activities centres and has provided welfare counselling to refugees as its resources have allowed.

90. In 1980, UNDP initiated special projects to assist youth, women and handicapped children at a cost of \$70,119, \$147,903 and \$431,088, respectively. The youth programme was designed to strengthen institutions and organizations that had potential for assisting young people and for developing youth counselling services. UNDP provided training in youth work and provided equipment and supplies to improve facilities at community centres and community libraries in Nablus (West Bank) and Rafah (Gaza Strip).

91. The women's programme aimed at strengthening existing community centres for women by providing equipment and training for the improvement of women's skills in home economics, sewing, knitting, literacy, hygiene, nutrition and secretarial work. UNDP also organized seminars for women on product promotion and marketing and on the introduction of new skills.

92. The programme for assistance to handicapped children consisted of three projects. Under the first, UNDP provided financial support for instructors and equipment to an institution in Gaza at which 35 deaf, blind, physically handicapped or mildly mentally retarded children received medical attention, counselling and vocational training. Under the second, UNDP provided equipment to set up a centre for 25 mentally retarded boys and contracted with a West Bank union of charitable societies to operate it. The third project involved assistance to two centres in Gaza, one each for boys and girls, for vocational rehabilitation of school drop-outs. Remedial courses and counselling were provided. UNDP reports that the results exceeded expectations and that the activities are continuing under other sponsorships.

93. Since 1983 the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs/Branch for the Advancement of Women has been preparing reports on the situation of women and children living in the occupied Arab territories (see E/CN.6/1984/10, A/CONF.116/16 and E/CN.6/1986/7). The Centre is currently preparing a comprehensive report on the situation of Palestinian women living within and outside the occupied Arab territories, which will be submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-second session in 1988. The report will focus on the identification of the main humanitarian needs of Palestinian women. On the basis of the report and conclusions of the Commission, future projects of assistance to Palestinian women will be elaborated. These projects should become an integral part of the United Nations programme of assistance to the Palestinian people. In view of the fact that women's issues have been given the highest priority in the United Nations system, women's specific needs and concerns should be taken into consideration, wherever possible, in the implementation of the programme.

1. Current and planned activities

(a) Assistance to special hardship cases among refugees (UNRWA, 1987: \$8,547,353; 1988: \$8,886,011; 1989: \$9,238,119; 1990: \$9,604,211)

94. In 1987, 59,000 refugees were classified as special hardship cases, 24,000 in the West Bank and 35,000 in the Gaza Strip. Of the total budgeted expenditure for 1987, \$5,085,502 was for the West Bank and \$3,461,851 for the Gaza Strip. Assistance provided to special hardship cases consists of food rations (the equivalent of 1,850 calories a day), blankets, clothing, small cash grants and shelter repair. A programme to enable families to become self-supporting has been introduced recently. In the coming years, UNRWA will seek to improve the quality of assistance, to develop more income-generating and self-support schemes and to obtain a broader involvement of non-governmental organizations.

(b) Welfare services to refugees (UNRWA, 1987: \$853,987; 1988: \$881,955; 1989: \$910,857; 1990: \$940,722)

95. Welfare services are provided to all refugees wishing to avail themselves of them. They consist of youth activities centres, women's activities centres, sewing and carpentry training centres, limited assistance to the disabled and social counselling. Youth activities centres promote sport and cultural activities for young people, especially for those living in camps. Women's activities centres provide a meeting point for women for cultural activities as well as for courses in literacy and home economics. Sewing and carpentry centres give the refugees the basic knowledge needed to establish small businesses. UNRWA intends to continue these activities within the limits of available funding while, at the same time, seeking to increase community interest and involvement.

(c) Assistance to the blind (UNRWA, 1987: \$218,097; 1988: \$226,821; 1989: \$235,894; 1990: \$245,329)

96. UNRWA administers and operates a training centre for the blind in Gaza on behalf of a non-governmental organization that furnishes most of the funds required. The centre provides special education for blind children and vocational training for blind adults. UNRWA can continue this operation only so long as the requisite financial support is forthcoming.

(d) Construction in support of relief services to refugees (UNRWA, 1987: \$282,400; 1988: \$293,384; 1989: \$305,119; 1990: \$317,324)

97. UNRWA plans to carry out much needed construction in support of its relief services that can only be implemented when special contributions are received. Of the total amount budgeted for 1987, \$450,000 is for expenditure in the West Bank and \$442,000 in the Gaza Strip. Projects envisaged include a storm-water disposal system in a camp, renovation and extension of existing sewing centres, renovation of a water system in a camp, construction of new latrines in a camp, construction of a new women's activities centre and construction at the training centre for the blind.

## J. Human settlements

98. The living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories have been a matter of continuing concern to the international community, especially through the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) since its establishment in 1978. In response to various resolutions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on Human Settlements (Habitat) has produced a series of comprehensive analytical studies on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories, prepared by expert consultants (see A/35/533 and Corr.1, A/36/260 and Add.1-3, A/37/238, A/38/278 and A/39/233). In addition and in response to General Assembly resolution 39/169, Habitat organized a seminar held at Vienna from 25 to 29 March 1985 that considered remedies for the deterioration of the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories (for the report of the seminar, see A/40/373-E/1985/99).

99. In 1986, the Executive Director submitted to the Commission at its ninth session a report (HS/C/9/6/Add.4) on the activities for the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless in the occupied Palestinian territories, which contained 26 specific project proposals in the field of human settlements. The Executive Director has since written to potential donor countries, financial institutions and relevant United Nations organizations, drawing their attention to these specific project proposals and requesting them to give favourable consideration to their financing.

100. In 1987, Habitat organized a seminar on priority development projects needed for improving the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories. (For projects recommended, see para. 12 above; for the report of the seminar, see A/42/183-E/1987/53.) In addition, the Executive Director presented a report to the Commission at its tenth session (HS/C/10/3/Add.3), which contained a study prepared by an expert consultant on the institutions and instruments needed for financing and implementing a housing programme in the occupied Palestinian territories.

### 1. Current projects: training fellowships (funded)

101. Habitat has offered nine middle-level training fellowships in the field of human settlements for qualified Palestinians.

### 2. Projects suggested for the future (unfunded)

102. These include the 26 specific projects listed in document HS/C/9/6/Add.4 and those recommended by the 1987 seminar listed in paragraph 12 above. Additionally, Habitat has indicated its willingness, subject to the agreement of the parties concerned, to implement such projects as a housing survey in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, provision of construction machinery and equipment for municipalities and co-operatives, establishment of a housing fund and provision of fellowships.

### III. FINANCING AND IMPLEMENTATION

103. The programme outlined above includes both funded and unfunded projects. In general, those classified as current and planned are funded and those for the future are unfunded. Of the current and planned projects, those for implementation by UNRWA are funded for 1987 and are included in the UNRWA medium-term plan for 1988 to 1990 as part of its regular programme budget. If, as in past years, UNRWA receives sufficient funds to enable it to maintain its regular programme, it may be assumed that those projects will be implemented. Those for implementation by UNDP comprise the projects included in the 1987-1991 cycle, for which an initial amount of \$8 million from UNDP central resources has been allocated. It should be noted, however, that some of UNDP's current and planned projects are being funded by special contributions. Other projects are funded by other programmes and agencies, such as ILO, WHO and UNFPA, but are administered by UNDP, funding for which is made available by the organizations concerned from their own regular budgets. Other projects, such as those being carried out independently by UNCSO, UNICEF, UNCTAD, UNEP, ESCWA, Habitat, FAO, UNESCO, UPU, ITU, WMO, IMO, WIPO and UNIDO are financed either from their regular budgets or from extrabudgetary funds at their disposal.

104. The projects suggested for the future are, in the main, relatively costly and financing for most of them must be sought from extrabudgetary sources. The inescapable need follows that all concerned with the economic and social development of the Palestinian people should make concerted efforts to secure the funding required. It is hoped that this draft programme will provide a useful base from which appeals for funds may be launched.

105. There are undeniable impediments to the implementation of a programme in the occupied territories that do not exist in the case of a normal country programme. These impediments, however, should not be regarded as insurmountable. UNRWA has operated in the occupied territories since 1967 in accordance with its mandate and with specific agreements reached with the Israeli authorities. UNDP has developed a set of arrangements that have enabled it to establish and expand its programme in the occupied territories. Other agencies and programmes such as ILO, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO, have also developed arrangements to make it possible for them to operate in the occupied territories either through UNDP and UNRWA or independently. A start has been made, foundations have been laid, programmes and projects are being implemented, valuable experience has been gained, needs and possibilities are more clearly perceived, modalities have been worked out and co-operative relationships with the local Palestinian population have been established. With the goodwill and co-operation of all concerned, there seems to be no reason why this process could not be continued and expanded.

Notes

1/ FAO has expressed interest in partially or totally executing the project.

2/ FAO has expressed interest in being designated as the executing agency for the project, which falls within its field of competence. It is not, however, in a position to provide financial support for the project.

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Assistance to the Palestinian people

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

1. In its resolution 41/181 of 8 December 1986, the General Assembly, inter alia, welcomed the decision of the Secretary-General to send a mission to prepare the programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people requested in Assembly resolution 38/145 of 19 December 1983. Further, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to convene in 1987 a meeting of the relevant programmes, organizations, agencies, funds and bodies of the United Nations system to consider economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people and to invite the Palestine Liberation Organization, the Arab host countries and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to participate in the meeting.

2. Accordingly, the Secretary-General convened a meeting of the relevant entities of the United Nations system that was held at Geneva on 19 June 1987. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 41/181, representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the Arab host countries and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations participated in the meeting.

\* A/42/50.

3. Representatives of the following programmes, organizations, agencies and bodies of the United Nations system attended the meeting: Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, Department of Technical Co-operation for Development and the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs and Secretariat Services of the United Nations Secretariat, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, United Nations Centre for Human Settlements, United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, International Labour Organisation, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, World Health Organization, Universal Postal Union, International Telecommunication Union, World Meteorological Organization, World Intellectual Property Organization and United Nations Industrial Development Organization.

4. The following intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations were represented: Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization, Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, Commission of the European Communities, Islamic Development Bank, International Islamic Federation of Student Organizations and Organization of the Islamic Conference.

5. The Director, Office of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation of the United Nations Secretariat, acted as Chairman.

6. The meeting had before it the report of the Secretary-General (A/42/289-E/1987/66), which included the draft programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people.

7. There was a useful exchange of views at the meeting, which led to agreement on the following general conclusions:

(a) The report of the Secretary-General provided evidence of the continuing commitment of the agencies and programmes of the United Nations system to provide economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people. Given its focus on the activities of the system in the occupied territories, the report did not reflect the contributions of the Arab host countries;

(b) There was general agreement on the co-ordinated programme presented in the report. It was noted that such a programme should not be viewed as static but as an evolving, dynamic framework for action. Note was also taken of the specific priorities within the programme identified by the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization. Concern was expressed that the consultant did not visit the occupied territories as part of his mission;

(c) With general agreement on the proposed programme, efforts should now turn to its implementation. A major effort in that regard involved the mobilization of the necessary resources. To that end, it was suggested that a joint effort by the Palestine Liberation Organization and the United Nations might be considered. It was agreed that all appropriate modalities for raising the necessary resources should be pursued in order to promote the early implementation of the programme;



(d) The participants in the meeting noted the difficulties encountered by some organizations in implementing projects in the occupied territories and expressed the hope that these difficulties would be resolved;

(e) The participants expressed the need for projects to be productive and to help the Palestinian people better themselves, especially in terms of providing training and employment opportunities;

(f) The participants recognized the seriousness of financial constraints but agreed that this should not be an insurmountable obstacle to the implementation of an effective programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people.

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Assistance to the Palestinian people

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Addendum

The following additional information has been provided by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) for inclusion in the report of the Secretary-General on assistance to the Palestinian people.

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

[Original: English]

I. FELLOWSHIPS

1. During the current biennium, 15 scholarships for 9 months each, at a total cost of \$73,300, have been awarded to Palestinian students at the request of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). Similar requests are currently being examined by the Secretariat for the 1987/1988 academic year.
2. Five short-term fellowships were awarded in 1986 at the request of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)/UNESCO Department of Education to Palestinians employed by UNRWA in its education programme in the five fields of operation at a total cost of \$34,700. Thirteen similar fellowships for 1987 are currently being processed.
3. With regard to assistance to Palestinian universities in the occupied Arab territories, five scholarships at a total cost of \$32,300 were awarded to members of the academic staff of two universities during the 1986/1987 academic year. Candidatures are currently being submitted for the 1987/1988 academic year.
4. Under the participation programme, 18 scholarships were awarded to Palestinian students at the request of PLO for a total amount of \$62,000 for the 1986/1987 academic year. A similar number of requests is expected for the 1987/1988 academic year.

II. EQUIPMENT

5. Educational equipment and supplies worth \$50,000 were purchased for the UNRWA/UNESCO Department of Education during the current biennium.
6. Equipment worth \$34,350 was purchased during the biennium for three universities in the occupied Arab territories.
7. Equipment costing \$10,000 was purchased for the Palestinian Open University in 1987.

III. EDUCATION OF PALESTINE REFUGEES

8. During the current biennium, UNESCO continued to loan to UNRWA, on a full-time basis, 15 posts attached to the UNRWA/UNESCO Department of Education, including that of the Director, at a total cost of \$2,117,000, financed under the UNESCO regular programme. In addition, UNESCO loaned to UNRWA, for a period of six months in 1987, a programme specialist in special education to offer technical support to special education services in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip under the supervision of the UNRWA Field Office at Jerusalem.

#### IV. EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES

9. In conformity with resolution 27 adopted by the General Conference at its twenty-third session, in which the Conference invited the Director-General to "appoint a leading academic personality with responsibility for conducting a comprehensive study of the conditions in which academic freedoms are guaranteed and exercised in the occupied Arab territories", the Director-General requested the Reverend Father E. Boné (Belgium), Professor at the Catholic University of Louvain, to carry out the above-mentioned study. The Reverend Father Boné undertook a series of missions in this respect, in particular to UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, the United Nations Commission for Human Rights at Geneva, Amman, the occupied Arab territories and Israel, and submitted a report on his findings to the Director-General in August 1987. The Director-General is submitting this report in extenso to the Executive Board at its one hundred and twenty-seventh session. The question will also be examined by the General Conference at its twenty-fourth session.

#### V. PALESTINIAN OPEN UNIVERSITY

10. Since it elaborated the feasibility study in 1979 for the Palestinian Open University, jointly with the Arab League Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, UNESCO has maintained close relations with the authorities of the University, now denominated Al-Quds Open University, and has provided assistance, mainly in the form of technical advice. A consultant mission took place for this purpose in 1986 to determine with the University's President specific fields where UNESCO assistance is urgently needed. Other requests for consultant services are now being examined by the secretariat and consultations thereon are taking place with the University's authorities. However, in view of the scope of the needs of this University and the limited funds, the secretariat is at present investigating the possibility of mobilizing appropriate funding from extrabudgetary sources on the basis of a fund-in-trust.

#### VI. UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM "AL-QUDS" FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES

11. The General Assembly, in its resolution 35/13 B of 3 November 1980, requested the Secretary-General, in co-ordination with the Council of the United Nations University, UNRWA and UNESCO, to study ways and means of establishing the University of Jerusalem "Al-Quds" under the aegis of the United Nations. However, UNESCO was not invited to contribute to the functional feasibility study, which was first requested by the General Assembly in resolution 36/146 G of 16 December 1981 and since then has been entrusted to the United Nations University. UNESCO has no activities at present concerning the University of Jerusalem "Al-Quds".

## VII. PIPELINE PROJECT

12. In conformity with General Conference resolution 22 C/23, the Director-General launched an appeal in 1986 to all member States, as well as to regional, subregional and interregional development agencies and intergovernmental organizations, for voluntary contributions for the establishment of a Scholarship Fund for the Higher Education of Students of the Occupied Arab Territories. Pledges of contributions have so far been received from the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the Arab Organization for Industrial Development. A fund-in-trust (420/RAB/10) was established in 1987 for this Scholarship Fund to be financed by voluntary contributions, with a target budget of \$2,500,000 for financing 50 scholarships a year.

### UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST

[Original: English]

1. A study on food security in the West Bank and Gaza Strip was conducted in collaboration with the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development in October 1985. It analyses the performance of the agricultural sector, Israeli practices and the shortage of agricultural products in the occupied Palestinian territories.
2. A study entitled "The financial sector in the occupied Palestinian territories", conducted in collaboration with the Special Economic Unit of UNCTAD, has been completed.
3. A survey entitled "Technical and vocational training and education in the West Bank and Gaza" is being conducted. It covers all vocational and educational centres in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, including major obstacles in this field. The survey is aimed at identifying a programme of work to improve vocational training and technical education in the occupied territories.
4. A feasibility study for a training and educational centre in the agricultural sector in the West Bank is being prepared. It is based on the recommendations of the survey mentioned above, which indicates that there is a great need to establish such a centre. It is expected to be completed by the end of 1987.
5. A study on marketing of agricultural products in the occupied Palestinian territories is being prepared. It focuses on the problems faced by Palestinians in marketing their agricultural products. It examines ways and means of solving marketing problems. It is expected to be completed by the end of 1987.



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Corrigendum

Page 4

The heading after paragraph 12 should read

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Assistance to the Palestinian people  
Report of the Secretary-General

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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The General Assembly in resolution 42/166 welcomed the programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people contained in the report of the Secretary-General on assistance to the Palestinian people (A/42/289-E/1987/86 and Add.1 and 2) and requested the Secretary-General to develop the programme, to seek its early implementation in close co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization, and to co-ordinate the activities envisaged by various organizations of the United Nations system within the framework of the programme. In addition, it requested him to mobilize resources for the implementation of the projects contained in the programme, in close co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization, and urged the international community, the United Nations system and intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations to sustain and increase their assistance to the Palestinian people in co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization.

2. In accordance with the resolution, consultations were held with the Observer Mission of the Palestine Liberation Organization to the United Nations.

3. Pursuant to the General Assembly's request to the Secretary-General to mobilize resources for the programme, a letter was sent to 19 intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and funds, asking for their assistance in providing funding for the projects contained in the programme (see annex). The Secretary-General also addressed a note verbale to Member States in which he drew attention to the General Assembly's request for increased assistance to the Palestinian people and expressed the hope that they would be in a position to provide funding for the programme.

4. As requested by the General Assembly, the present report covers the action taken by the agencies and organizations of the United Nations system in implementing and further developing the programme of economic and social assistance contained in the report of the Secretary-General (A/42/289-E/1987/86 and Add.1 and 2) and in mobilizing resources for the programme pursuant to General Assembly resolution 42/166. It should be considered in conjunction with the above-mentioned report containing the programme of economic and social assistance. Information received at a later date will be published as an addendum.

## II. RESPONSE TO THE EMERGENCY IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

5. In his report to the Security Council pursuant to resolution 605 (1987) (S/19443), the Secretary-General stated that, in response to the views expressed by the Palestinians regarding the improvement of conditions in the camps, he had asked the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) to prepare urgently proposals for improving the infrastructure of the camps and to seek the necessary funds. He also stated that many of the Palestinians consulted had expressed the hope that a concerted international effort could be undertaken to revive the territories' economy, perhaps initially through an expansion of the existing programme of the

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the territories, and that he had requested the Administrator of UNDP to study the possibility of expanding the programme.

6. In February-March 1988, UNRWA prepared a package of projects, including an indication of resources required (which amounted to approximately \$65 million), and presented it to an informal meeting of major donors and host Governments immediately followed by a meeting of the Advisory Commission of the Agency. On both occasions wide support was expressed for the approach taken and UNRWA is actively seeking contributions which would enable it to implement its proposals during the period 1988-1990. Areas of proposed activities include improvement of sewerage, shelters, road maintenance, upgrading of the Agency's health and education facilities, a new hospital block in Gaza, water supply in Gaza, expansion of vocational training and university scholarship programmes, as well as strengthening of income-generating and small development projects. So far, a total of some \$25 million has been pledged in cash and in kind.

7. UNRWA has also expanded its educational, health and relief programmes to deal with the emergency situation. Emergency plans have been prepared to make up for the teaching time lost in the school year 1987/1988. In the health centres, working hours were extended and special teams of doctors were constituted to render aid to injured refugees in camps under curfew. In Gaza, the mid-day meal programme was extended to children who are not normally eligible, the distribution of powdered milk to children was expanded and the dry ration programme was increased to benefit all pregnant women and nursing mothers. Additional budget provisions were made to meet hospitalization costs resulting from the emergency. Other emergency aid in the form of food, supplies and cash has been provided to refugees and to a small number of non-refugees in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. Temporary health, relief and refugee affairs personnel have been employed to assist in the distribution of the aid, to counsel families in distress, to escort vehicles and to monitor and report on the situation as it affects Agency operations.

8. Pursuant to the Secretary-General's request, the Administrator of UNDP requested the UNDP Governing Council, at its special session in February 1988, to take urgent steps to reinforce the programme through an additional allocation of \$4 million from Special Programme Resources, over and above the \$8 million previously allocated for the planning period 1987-1991. The Governing Council acceded to this request and appealed to Governments and intergovernmental institutions for further voluntary contributions.

9. During the course of the Governing Council's special session, the Government of Japan announced a special contribution of \$1 million, subject to parliamentary approval. The Government of Italy indicated that the UNDP pipeline of projects was under study and that the Italian Government intended to select certain projects for official consideration for co-funding. The Administrator informed the Council that those and other indications made it appear that substantially increased funding would be available. In this connection, UNDP is undertaking measures, in consultation with the Palestine Liberation Organization, to attract additional financial support in accordance with General Assembly resolution 42/166.

10. On 29 April 1988, pursuant to a decision of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation convened a meeting of organizations of the United Nations system to discuss the assistance that could be extended to the people of the occupied territories. The representatives of ILO, FAO, UNESCO, WHO, UNIDO, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNEP, UNRWA, UNCHS, UNCTAD, DIEC, DIESA and ESCWA participated in the meeting. All organizations expressed a willingness to expand their activities in the area, provided additional funding was available, within the framework of the programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people.

11. In May 1988, UNDP sent a programming and operational review mission to the occupied territories of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip for the purpose of discussing a number of questions relating to the implementation of the programme. During its five-day visit to the area the mission concluded that the unrest and demonstrations that have characterized the situation in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip have had an inevitable effect on the delivery of various aspects of the UNDP projects. Nevertheless, the UNDP programme continues to operate at full strength, and UNDP continues to plan its activities in consultation with all directly-concerned parties, including in particular the Palestinian inhabitants. The UNDP office in Jerusalem is successfully carrying out its functions of supervising the UNDP Palestinian Programme and is prepared to assist other United Nations agencies with expanded or new programmes with a variety of management services. The mission found renewed interest by donor Governments in assistance to the Palestinian people. During the mission agreement was reached on the new projects proposed by UNDP (see sect. III below).

### III. PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAMME OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE TO THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

12. Considerable progress has been taken over the past year in implementing and further developing the programme of economic and social assistance contained in the report of the Secretary-General (A/42/289-E/1987/86 and Add.1 and 2), as described below. All projects referred to in this report are funded or partially funded. Virtually all the projects could be readily and quickly expanded if additional funding becomes available. Proposed projects which still require funding are listed in the programme contained in the report of the Secretary-General mentioned above.

#### A. Research, analysis and organization of data

##### 1. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

13. During 1987, ESCWA undertook and completed several studies related to assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories:

(a) Survey on vocational and technical training in the West Bank and Gaza (May 1987);

(b) Feasibility study on the establishment of a technical agricultural centre in the West Bank and Gaza (December 1987);

(c) Promotion of agricultural exports in the occupied Palestinian territories (West Bank and Gaza Strip);

(d) The Palestinian financial sector under Israeli occupation (July 1987). Study prepared in collaboration with UNCTAD (see para. 15 (a) below).

14. In addition, ESCWA has provided technical assistance to the joint Palestinian-Jordanian Committee concerning the social and economic conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories. Technical assistance has been provided to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics for the household income and expenditure survey conducted in refugees camps in 1986. This assistance covered data processing, estimation of sampling errors and checking consistency within and between tables. In 1988, the following activities will be carried out:

(a) Social studies series on the Palestinian people, covering population, labour force and education;

(b) Study on the economic conditions in the occupied Palestinian territories (jointly with UNCTAD);

(c) Report on the manufacturing sector in the occupied Palestinian territories;

(d) Study on Israeli trade practices in the occupied Palestinian territories, to be prepared in co-operation with UNCTAD.

15. Technical assistance on data processing will continue to be provided to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and assistance will also be provided to the Palestinian Open University.

## 2. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

16. In accordance with its mandate, UNCTAD through its Special Economic Unit (Palestinian people) has continued for the third consecutive year to prepare reports and technical publications which examine developments in the economic conditions of the occupied Palestinian territories. During the period from March 1987 to February 1988, the following work was accomplished by the Special Economic Unit:

(a) An in-depth study of the Palestinian financial sector under Israeli occupation was prepared in collaboration with ESCWA (UNCTAD/ST/SEU/3). The study, in particular, investigates the banking and monetary system of these territories, analyses fiscal determinants, focusing on changes in the tax system of the territories since 1967 and the role played by government revenues and expenditures, reviews the role of external resources, including transfers, as factor income from labour outside the territories and as international aid, in the financing of the

Palestinian economy. It contains some recommendations aimed at improving the structure and performance of the financial sector, thus enhancing the role and effectiveness of policy measures in the mobilization and allocation of financial resources within the Palestinian economy.

(b) The report entitled "Recent economic developments in the occupied Palestinian territories, with special reference to the financial sector" (TD/B/1142) was prepared for the thirty-fourth session (first part) of the Trade and Development Board.

(c) The Unit prepared the following three background documents, which include abstracts from the data base of the Unit on different aspects of the Palestinian economy: (i) "Selected statistical tables on the economy of the occupied Palestinian territories (West Bank and Gaza Strip)" (UNCTAD/ST/SEU/4); (ii) "Selected bibliography on the economy of the occupied Palestinian territories (West Bank and Gaza Strip)" (UNCTAD/ST/SEU/5); and (iii) "Selected chronology on economic issues and related Israeli practices in the occupied Palestinian territories (West Bank and Gaza Strip) June 1986-June 1987" (UNCTAD/ST/SEU/6).

(d) The Unit expanded its data base on the Palestinian economy, including the regular revision and updating of statistical series, drawing where possible on alternative statistical sources. This included keeping abreast of new publications and references on the Palestinian economy and regular monitoring of economic issues in the occupied Palestinian territories.

17. According to its 1988-1989 work programme, UNCTAD is planning the preparation of a number of studies and reports, as well as the formulation of operational projects. These activities will include, in particular:

(a) A comprehensive study, entitled "The external trade of the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip", due for completion in mid-1988, which will, inter alia, examine the role of trade and services in the Palestinian economy; the performance of the external trade sector; major factors, including policies, practices and structural limitations, affecting the external trade of the territories; the potential of external trade in the territories, and the requisite policies and measures aimed at promoting Palestinian external trade.

(b) The 1988 report to the thirty-fifth session of the Trade and Development Board (first part) on assistance to the Palestinian people, which will comprise an update of recent economic developments in the occupied territories, both in terms of basic indicators and relevant aspects of Israeli economic policy.

(c) Preparation of documents providing extracts and updates from the Unit's data base on the Palestinian economy, including statistical series, research references and bibliography.

(d) Preparation of a comprehensive study, entitled "The West Bank and Gaza Strip: prospects for sustained economic development", due for completion by the end of 1989, which will require inputs and contributions, including extrabudgetary resources, from relevant entities of the United Nations system and regional bodies concerned.

(e) Preparation of two project proposals for technical assistance in institution-building for the economic development of the occupied Palestinian territories. The draft project proposals are due for completion by mid-1988.

18. In accordance with paragraph 6 of Conference resolution 169 (VII), the Unit is currently studying, in consultation with ITC, the modalities of providing advice on the measures needed for the establishment of a centre in the occupied territories for the marketing of Palestinian products.

### 3. International Trade Centre

19. Contacts have been initiated with the UNDP programme of assistance to the Palestinian people with a view to determining if ITC Market News Service could assist the Palestinian people in their export efforts.

#### B. Infrastructure

##### 1. United Nations Development Programme

20. In addition to the projects currently under implementation, UNDP proposes the following new projects:

Drinking Water - Gaza Strip: In consideration of the need to eliminate the high salinity and chloride content of the Gaza Strip water, it is proposed to establish a pilot project to explore the means of conserving and treating water by, possibly, the use of reverse osmosis. UNDP input will be \$400,000.

Nablus Sewage: UNDP has previously undertaken to design a sewage system for the Nablus area. Once the designs are completed, efforts will be made to solicit funds from interested Governments for the construction of the system. UNDP input - \$300,000.

Commercial Centres: Income-generating small businesses, such as appliance repairs, hardware stores and grocery stores, could be established with the construction of commercial centres. UNDP proposes to construct five to six such centres in key locations in both the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and is prepared to fund \$750,000 for it.

Assistance to the Municipalities: UNDP proposes to establish wholesale agricultural markets and cold storage facilities and to provide assorted equipment to Municipalities and Village Councils in both the West Bank and Gaza Strip. UNDP input will be \$1 million. It is likely that non-UNDP funds will also be available to finance additional activities under this project.

## 2. United Nations Children's Fund

### Water supply and sanitation

21. UNICEF support will be provided, in co-operation with Save the Children Federation and the communities concerned, to reduce the incidence of water-related diseases in 25 villages in high-risk areas in the northern part of the West Bank, the Jordan Valley and the southern part of the Gaza Strip, for the benefit of some 140,000 people. UNICEF will provide pipes and fittings to Save the Children Federation, while the communities will finance the water supplies costs of household. In the 25 villages to be provided with water, community education on child survival, environmental sanitation and hygiene will be supported through health education campaigns and the training of 45 workers. Support will also be provided for the establishment and training of local water committees (seven persons per committee) in maintenance and hygiene issues. Audio-visual equipment will be provided for the production unit of the Near East Council of Churches to produce materials to use in the training of health staff and community leaders and in the health education campaigns.

22. The estimated planned annual expenditures, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, for the period of 1988-1991 for this programme will be 1988 - \$160,000, 1989 - \$185,000, 1990 - \$140,000, 1991 - \$60,000, totalling \$545,000.

### C. Agriculture

#### 1. United Nations Development Programme

23. By March 1988, the following three projects in the field of agriculture, financed from the UNDP central resources, were completed: "Training in agricultural development", "Agricultural training (Syria)" and "Agricultural and hydrology laboratory". The full costs of these projects are \$618,737.

24. The total financial allocations to the projects in the field of agriculture, including projects financed by special contributions and associated agencies, as at March 1988, was \$1,782,600.

25. For the remainder of its Fourth Cycle (1987-1991) the UNDP has a number of projects in the agricultural area which are now fully funded, in particular:

Food processing: A detailed feasibility study will be conducted in order to establish the viability of food processing facilities for different kinds of fruits, vegetables, etc. UNDP input - \$250,000.

Grape processing: A feasibility study already exists. UNDP proposes to establish processing facilities with a co-operative for concentrate only, which may be easily exported to Arab countries. UNDP input - \$300,000.

Agricultural machinery centres: UNDP proposes to establish agricultural equipment centres in key areas where farmers may rent required machinery at nominally less. UNDP input - \$1 million.

Beekeeping: The project calls for the upgrading of existing hives and extension of beekeeping facilities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. UNDP input - \$50,000.

Dairy laboratories: UNDP proposes to establish dairy laboratories to provide the means of testing dairy products and improving their quality. UNDP input - \$150,000.

Pickling: UNDP proposes to establish facilities for pickling of various vegetables to be marketed in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. It is planned to set up these facilities with charitable societies. UNDP input - \$350,000.

Seedling development: Seedling operations already exist in the West Bank and Gaza Strip but they appear to operate in an outmoded, inefficient manner. It is proposed to establish a project to provide technical assistance in the form of new technology, training and equipment. UNDP input - \$200,000.

Poultry hatchery: Poultry hatcheries are non-existent in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. UNDP proposes to set up a 300,000-egg hatchery, to include parent and grandparent breeding. UNDP input - \$1 million.

Sprinkler and drip irrigation: UNDP proposes to set up two sprinkler and drip irrigation systems in the Gaza Strip. UNDP input - \$500,000.

Ein Duke Drinking Water and Irrigation System: UNDP proposes to establish the necessary facilities for providing water for drinking or irrigation purposes to the Ein Duke Area, which at present faces serious shortages. The necessary wells are already available. UNDP input - \$400,000.

Auja Irrigation: It is planned to develop the Auja spring and to construct distribution systems for the irrigation of 6,000 dunums of land for growing bananas, melons and vegetables. UNDP input - \$1 million.

## 2. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

26. FAO is continuing to provide three fellowships, two in agricultural economics and one in animal production. The project duration has been extended to cover 66 work-months with a total budget of \$US 68,500. FAO is also assisting Al-Quds Open University to develop its curriculum in agriculture through the provision of short-term consultants and audio-visual equipment.



## D. Industry

### United Nations Development Programme

27. By March 1988, the project "Training in industrial management", financed mainly from the UNDP central resources, was completed. Two other projects - "Industrial development (Olive Oil)" and "Glass and ceramics" are currently under implementation. The resources for the financing of these projects in the amount of \$690,000 were authorized from the Third UNDP Cycle (1982-1986). For the remainder of the Fourth Cycle, ending in 1991, UNDP will undertake two additional projects in the area of industry. They are:

Industrial Zones: Plans for establishing an Industrial Zone in Nablus are ready for implementation. In addition, UNDP expects to review possibilities for setting up such zones in other areas of the West Bank and Gaza Strip with possible financing from non-UNDP sources. UNDP input - \$1 million.

Small-scale Business Development Centre: UNDP proposes to finance and operate a business development Centre to provide facilities for feasibility studies, business management advisory and marketing services, training, and subject to availability of financing from other sources, a low-cost credit system based on a revolving fund. UNDP input will be \$500,000.

## E. Employment

### 1. International Labour Organisation

28. The ILO International Centre for Advanced Technical and Vocational Training in Turin has prepared two programmes which will be financed by UNDP.

29. The first of these programmes (which was the subject of a specialized industrial management programme undertaken by the Turin Centre in 1984 with UNDP financing) is designed to supplement entrepreneur training on the West Bank and in Gaza. It was originally proposed to implement the programme in 1988; it will be implemented as soon as arrangements can be made locally.

30. The second programme concerns the training of trainers for entrepreneur development and follows the pattern of the three previous programmes carried out in 1984-86 for participants from small and medium-sized enterprises on the West Bank and in Gaza. The new programme is intended for teachers from higher education institutions that have or would like to set up entrepreneur training units. The programme is designed to last 11 weeks. The methods of its implementation are being examined.

31. Further activities, connected in particular with the situation that has developed since December 1987, are under consideration. They involve in particular:

Special programmes that are likely to contribute to the employment and training of young people;

Replacement work that might be necessary as a result of the disruption in the labour market;

The vocational reintegration of persons who have been in prison and consequently have difficulties in finding a job;

Vocational rehabilitation of handicapped persons;

Social security;

Occupational safety and health in the broad sense of the term;

Training for labour administrators;

Assistance to organizations for agricultural workers and extension services.

32. A certain number of projects are financed from a special allocation in the ILO's regular budget for technical co-operation, which exceeded \$100,000 during the 1986-1987 biennium. For the 1988-1989 biennium it is planned to set aside a sum at least equivalent, on the understanding that it could be increased according to the possibilities of project implementation, on the one hand, and to needs that may not be covered by other methods of financing, on the other. Other projects, including entrepreneur training projects, are financed by UNDP. In addition, a series of projects proposed by ILO are being considered for UNDP financing, including projects relating to the expansion of vocational training. ILO may also finance, partly or fully, some other UNDP projects in the fields of employment development, agriculture, crafts and industry as well as in training, particularly for women.

## 2. United Nations Development Programme

33. UNDP activities in this area during the last year were directed at the implementation of two projects - "Youth programme" and "Women's institutions", which were funded from UNDP central resources and cost \$218,000.

34. During the remainder of the Fourth Cycle, ending in December 1991, UNDP is planning to carry out a project entitled "Women's institute", under which it will establish a centre which will provide technical and specialized training for women in various fields, serve as a permanent exhibition to promote and market traditional and new products and possibly house small-scale industries operated by charitable organizations. UNDP input will be \$500,000.

**F. Education and vocational training**

**1. United Nations Relief and Works Agency for  
Palestine Refugees in the Near East**

35. In 1987-1988, the school population in the nine grades of education in the West Bank and Gaza reached 128,710 pupils, a net increase of 1,560 pupils over the previous school year. All increases occurred in Gaza, where a new school was opened which operates on a double-shift basis with another existing school. The class-sections with more than 50 pupils were reduced in Gaza from 59 to 10 and in the West Bank from 28 to 11. To cope with the natural increase of pupils and the reduction of class occupancy rates, additional teacher and school supervisor posts were established in the West Bank and Gaza.

36. Enrolment at the four Agency training centres in the occupied territories has increased over the last year by 48 trainees, reaching a total of 11,552 for vocational training and 550 for teacher training. A course of computer science was introduced at the Ramallah Men's Training Centre. At the Ramallah Women's Training Centre a new intake of 20 trainees was admitted for a new physiotherapy course, and plans are being made to introduce an additional course in nursing. Subject to availability of funds, the Agency plans to introduce additional courses in training centres over the coming three years. In 1987, for the fourth successive year the training centres in the West Bank obtained outstanding success rates in the General Comprehensive Examination administered by the Jordanian government for community colleges. In 1989-1990, semi-professional courses will be introduced for the first time at the Gaza Training Centre for both male and female trainees.

37. Three schools were constructed in the West Bank to replace unsatisfactory rented premises. The schools consist of 29 class-rooms, 8 administrative rooms, 3 multi-purpose rooms, 3 science laboratories and 3 libraries. In order to avoid triple shifts, 27 class-rooms in Gaza and 2 class-rooms in West Bank were erected or under construction in 1987. Eighteen school sanitary units were constructed in Gaza to replace unsuitable dilapidated units.

**2. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization**

38. UNESCO's major contribution to the education of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories is undertaken in co-operation with UNRWA. As in the past UNESCO continues to loan to UNRWA, on a full-time basis, 15 posts attached to the UNRWA/UNESCO Department of Education (including the D-2 post of the Director of the Department) at a total cost of \$2,117,000 from UNESCO's Regular Budget.

39. In addition, UNESCO awards short-term fellowships to Palestinians employed by UNRWA in its education programme in the five fields of operation. An amount of \$77,000 is foreseen during the current biennium for such fellowships.

40. Furthermore, UNESCO purchases some equipment under its regular programme for use at the UNRWA/UNESCO Department of Education. Some \$50,000 are foreseen for this purpose during the current biennium.

41. Finally UNESCO scrutinizes and approves textbooks for use in UNRWA schools. This is done through consultative services financed by UNESCO's regular programme.
42. UNESCO's activities in support of educational institutions in the occupied Arab territories are twofold: on the one hand, there is assistance provided to the Palestinian universities operating in the West Bank and Gaza in the form of short fellowships for in-service training of the academic staff and purchase of some equipment. An amount of \$95,000 is budgeted for this purpose during the current biennium. On the other hand, UNESCO attempts, in conformity with the relevant resolutions and decisions of its governing bodies, to undertake a permanent surveillance of the functioning of the educational institutions in those territories.
43. A mission was sent to the territories to investigate the question of academic freedom in 1987. A second mission is under preparation.
44. UNESCO maintains close relations with the authorities of the Al-Quds Open University, and has provided assistance, mainly in the form of technical advice. UNESCO is examining requests for consultant services, in consultation with the University authorities, and is also investigating the possibility of mobilizing appropriate funding from extrabudgetary sources on the basis of a fund-in-trust.
45. In conformity with General Conference resolution 22C/23, the Director-General of UNESCO launched an appeal in 1986 to all member States, as well as to regional, subregional and interregional development agencies and intergovernmental organizations, for voluntary contributions towards the establishment of a Scholarship Fund for the Higher Education of Students of the Occupied Territories. Pledges for contributions have so far been received from the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the Arab Organization for Industrial Development. A fund-in-trust, to be financed by voluntary contributions, was established in 1987 for this Scholarship Fund with a target budget of \$2,500,000 for financing 50 scholarships a year. The Director-General is now in the process of renewing this appeal in conformity with resolution 24C/25.

### 3. United Nations Development Programme

46. By March 1988, projects dealing with the promotion of pre-primary education and promotion of vocational training were completed with the assistance of UNDP. The UNDP funding of these projects from its central resources amount to \$632,700. The total allocation of finances to the current and future projects in the area of education and vocational training, to be implemented in the West Bank and Gaza, including special contributions and financing by associated agencies, was defined in March 1988 as \$1,829,173.
47. The projects to be implemented by UNDP from funds available during the Fourth Cycle (ending in December 1991), are:

Class-rooms: It is planned to construct five new 12-class-room schools in rural areas and towns, two in the Gaza Strip and three in the West Bank. In

addition, a project outline is being submitted to the Government of Italy for financing the construction of 5 to 10 additional schools. UNDP input - \$1.5 million.

Vocational training: It is proposed to conduct, in co-operation with ILO, extensive courses for training of VTC Trainers. In addition, UNDP is investigating the possibility of establishing mobile VTC facilities as well as the establishment in Gaza of a two-year technical school for high school graduates. UNDP input - \$750,000.

Specialized medical training: UNDP has long proposed the establishment of a paramedical training centre for a number of specializations. Unfortunately, for reasons beyond its control, this centre has not materialized. As an alternative, UNDP proposes to finance training programmes for some specializations, with existing institutions. UNDP input will be \$US 150,000.

#### 4. United Nations Children's Fund

48. In 1987, UNICEF provided technical assistance to local health departments to further develop the traditional birth attendants (TBA) training programme and funded the training of 16 supervisors (midwives) and 150 TBAs in the West Bank.

49. In the area of early childhood development, UNICEF assistance was directed to the establishment of four prototype child development centres for the prevention and early detection of the most common childhood disabilities and to the provision of guidance for treatment and rehabilitation. Assistance was also provided to train 652 kindergarten teachers and upgrade sanitation facilities in 60 kindergartens. In addition, construction materials and supplies were provided to renovate 20 kindergartens and basic furniture was provided to another 120. Pre-school facilities, such as day-care centres and kindergartens, are run by the private sector and the non-governmental organizations, but cover only 12 per cent of the total pre-school age-group in the West Bank and 6 per cent in Gaza. The project, originally scheduled to end in 1986, was extended for one year to permit a thorough review. The recommendations of this review form the basis for the new programme.

50. In the period from 1988 to 1990, six TBA supervisors from Gaza, two from each district, and 399 TBAs will be trained by local health authorities in safe delivery practices and in the promotion of child survival, particularly through oral rehydration therapy (ORT) and immunization.

51. A pilot project will be initiated in 1988 to introduce communities, on a self-help basis, to early childhood stimulation and development. It will be implemented in co-operation with the Social Welfare Society, operating in the northern part of the West Bank, and with the Society of Friends (Quakers) in the Gaza Strip. Fifty kindergarten teachers will be trained in community involvement and self-help programmes, and 30 families will be trained in toy-making as a source of income for themselves and the 24 kindergartens involved in the project. Ten kindergartens will be renovated to upgrade their sanitary and playground facilities and 20 will be given furniture to establish additional classes. The kindergartens

will also be used as demonstration and training units for toy production to replicate and expand the project. The pilot project will be evaluated in 1989, prior to expansion into other areas, and will eventually provide 10,000 children with pre-school services and 500 families with income-generating activities. By the end of the project, 260 teachers will have been trained, 200 kindergartens furnished and 30 renovated. All activities will be implemented in co-operation with the Federation of Philanthropic Organizations. The estimated planned expenditures for the period from 1988 to 1991, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, will be \$230,000.

### 5. International Labour Organisation

52. In the field of vocational training, an ILO consultant expert undertook a series of activities in April/May 1987 to evaluate needs for skilled manpower and the corresponding training needs in the main sectors of activity and occupation in order to work out proposals for the development of programmes and training institutions likely to meet these needs. These activities included a visit to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in April 1987, in the course of which consultations were held with a large number of local leaders and representatives of international agencies active in vocational training.

53. The initial proposals that resulted from these contacts and which involved financing in the range of \$500,000, mainly by UNDP, were re-examined with the UNDP representatives and were oriented towards a certain number of actions relating to specific training programmes for certain skills and for the training of instructors. A second consultancy mission for the implementation of these programmes is planned and will be carried out as soon as possible. The financing of these missions (some \$250,000) is met from the ILO's regular budget.

54. A course on training methodology for trade union instructors was prepared by the ILO International Centre for Advanced Technical and Vocational Training in Turin, financed by the regular budget for technical co-operation (approximately \$70,000). The course, which is intended for 18 participants from Palestinian trade unions on the West Bank and in Gaza, aims at providing them with instructor-training in methods of trade union administration and management so that they in turn may train trade union leaders.

55. This course was to have been held early in 1988 in Amman but has been postponed. Other courses of a similar nature are expected to be organized in various places.

### 6. Universal Postal Union

56. UPU provides two training fellowships at the Arab Faculty of Posts, Damascus, for two Palestinian nationals for four years (1986 to 1990 and 1990 to 1994). The total UPU contribution is estimated at 124,800 Swiss francs.

7. World Intellectual Property Organization

57. In 1987 WIPCC provided training for one Palestinian refugee in the field of copyright and for two Palestinian refugees in the field of industrial property.

8. United Nations University

58. UNU will continue to endeavour to provide fellowships for Palestinian scholars and scientists in accordance with its general training policies, bearing in mind the reduction of funds available for fellowships on account of current financial constraints.

9. United Nations Population Fund

59. UNFPA has provided three fellowships in the field of demography for post-graduate studies in the United Kingdom and has approved support for three fellowships in the Cairo Demographic Centre.

G. Health

1. World Health Organization

60. In response to the World Health Assembly resolutions, the Director-General of WHO has designated three WHO Collaborating Centres in the West Bank and Gaza to undertake activities in the field of primary health care research. This work is being carried out in close association between the UNDP, which administers the projects, and WHO which provides the financial support and is responsible for technical supervision.

61. The overall objective of all three centres is to undertake health systems research aimed at ensuring total coverage of the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories with primary health care, using the most appropriate technology.

62. The Centres have been operative since the following dates:

Ramallah Health Services Research Centre - June 1987

Gaza Health Services Research Centre - January 1986

Health Manpower Development Working Group  
of the Health Services of the West Bank - June 1986

63. The Ramallah Health Services Research Centre has made definite progress. Its current priority activities include evaluation of expanded primary health care projects; studies on infant mortality and serological surveys designed to provide better measurements of the immunization status of young population; studies on the monitoring of the growth and development of children; evaluation of the work of

traditional birth attendants (dayas), and analysis of factors promoting or constraining utilization of pre-natal care and hospital delivery; research on prevalence of cardiovascular risk factors; establishment of a service of special care for women with high risk pregnancies, etc.

64. The Gaza Health Services Research Centre, established in 1981 as the Epidemiology and Health Information Centre of the Gaza Health Services, has developed into a good source of health information and epidemiological monitoring of the health status of the population of the Gaza Strip. It has made progress in the development of the computerization of vital health statistical data. Staff of the Gaza Centre have also been extremely active in pursuing the work arising from the health services research training workshop.

65. The Health Manpower Development Working Group of the Health Services of the West Bank has made an important beginning in reviewing all existing scientific data concerning the health manpower available in the West Bank, beginning with physicians and nurses. Priority is being given to the need for co-ordinated and expanded medical, nursing and paramedical manpower training, and continuing education. The central focus in this work is the projection of manpower needs and the preparation of an overall health manpower plan for the area.

66. A training exercise in health services research has been undertaken in the territories with the objective of increasing the skills of the staff of the Centres and of those who work closely with them, in carrying out health services research. The workshop has provided encouragement and technical guidance to the participants in formulating and implementing a selection of relatively small yet relevant research projects, each being undertaken as a practical learning experience by all participants during a period of approximately six months. The Workshop took place in December 1986 and in June 1987 (the review meeting). There were 26 participants, assisted by a faculty of seven, all of them WHO consultants or staff.

67. There is also individual training abroad for the Directors and research officers of the Centres. Further fellowships have been awarded to candidates from the West Bank and Gaza for training for masters' degree in public health at the international level.

68. Each Centre is an integral part of the health services of the area concerned. The financial requirements to maintain the Centres in operation in 1987 remained of the same order as in 1986, and the Director-General of WHO has made a number of approaches in order to seek extrabudgetary funding. Some support for a small part of the needs, especially relating to research in maternal and child health, including family planning, was given by UNFPA. WHO funding has come so far exclusively from the Director-General's Development Programme.



2. United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees  
in the Near East

69. UNRWA has ensured full immunization coverage of children and pregnant women in the refugee camps, prevented incidence of major epidemics of communicable diseases, and met the target of no more than 50 deaths per thousand live births set by the World Health Organization for developing countries by the turn of the century.

70. The pilot projects concerning underweight children and those refugees who, because of declining economic conditions, need dietary assistance, have been completed and evaluated positively. The projects will be expanded and programmes based on them will gradually be introduced throughout the occupied territories.

71. In the West Bank, the projects for extension of two camp health centres were funded. A new health centre was built in Gaza town to replace old rented premises. Additional medical, nursing and other professional and support staff posts were established to cope with the increasing work-load at the health-centre level and to implement new activities and approaches in primary health care. Improved assistance was made possible through donations for upgrading diagnostic and treatment equipment. Specialists and special care clinics were further expanded by the establishment of a respiratory diseases clinic in one health centre and the procurement of equipment for two eye disease clinics in Gaza. Concerning in-patient medical care, the agreements with hospitals in both Gaza and West Bank were revised for wider provision of beds.

72. In order to increase the coverage of maternal and child care services, a second mobile health team was established in Gaza to serve the existing six maternal and child health sub-centres. Each sub-centre could thus be operated twice weekly instead of one day per week. Further improvements are planned for 1988 by establishing a third team, upgrading the staffing pattern of these teams and replacing inferior maternal and child health sub-centre premises. In the West Bank, two new maternal and child health centres were established and health centre premises in one camp were extended to facilitate the work of the maternal and child health clinic.

3. United Nations Development Programme

73. The health problems in the occupied Palestinian territories have received and continue to be given heavy emphasis in the activities of UNDP in that area. By March 1988, four health projects have been completed with the direct assistance of the UNDP. They are: "Development of health institutions I"; "Development of health institutions II"; "Children's institutions", and "Medical services training centre". The overall expenditures for these projects from UNDP resources constitute nearly \$1,600,000.

74. For the remainder of the UNDP Fourth Cycle (1987-1991) the following projects are planned for implementation with the assistance of the Programme:

Village clinics: UNDP plans to set up 15 to 20 clinics in rural areas and villages in the West Bank and Gaza, including regional clinics. Assistance under this project will be extended to local public health services as well as to non-governmental organizations, through provision of facilities for general treatment clinics and, in some cases, specialized clinics such as dental, maternity, etc. The Government of Italy has invited UNDP to prepare a proposal for the financing through UNDP of an additional 15 to 20 clinics by that Government. UNDP input - \$1 million.

Ambulance services: UNDP proposes to provide 10 ambulances for the purpose of establishing ambulance services in unserved areas of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. UNDP input - \$600,000.

75. Total financial allocations to the current and future projects in the field of health, including special contributions and inputs of associated agencies, as at March 1988, was defined in the amount of \$4,643,000.

#### 4. United Nations Children's Fund

##### Programme co-operation, 1984-1987

76. In 1984, the UNICEF Executive Board approved a project for the reduction of infant mortality and the enhancement of mental and physical development of children of pre-school age. The project was subsequently fully funded (\$1.7 million) by the Federal Republic of Germany.

77. UNICEF assistance was directed through the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) to help to extend immunization coverage through the provision of vaccines, syringes and needles, logistics support and cold-chain equipment. On the West Bank, immunization levels for children under one year of age reached more than 65 per cent for anti-tuberculosis vaccine, 75 per cent for three doses of combined diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus, 90 per cent for measles and 97 per cent for three doses of oral polio vaccine, while coverage in Gaza was even more complete.

78. Support was also provided for extending the use of oral rehydration therapy, particularly in the health and maternal and child health centres of the health delivery system. In addition, in the less developed villages in the Hebron district, UNICEF provided assistance to train 55 village health workers and equipped them with first-aid kits. Local communities provided those workers with premises from which to dispense basic health services and first-aid and to promote child survival and development activities.

##### Recommended programme co-operation, 1988-1991

79. The major UNICEF programme for the period from 1988 to 1991 is to bring about an appreciable reduction in infant mortality. The main elements of this programme, which will be implemented primarily in co-operation with UNRWA, are as follows:

(a) Expanded programme of immunization (EPI). In 1988, a joint WHO/UNICEF EPI and control of diarrhoeal diseases (CDD) review will be undertaken to facilitate the development of strategies to achieve universal child immunization by 1989. UNICEF support will also be directed to the provision of vaccines, disposable syringes, needles and cold-chain equipment to UNRWA; the formation of an EPI technical committee; and the provision of community education on preventive health, including immunization, through the health services and mass media.

(b) Diarrhoeal disease control. Assistance will be provided to expand and strengthen the CDD programme in order to reduce the number of children who die each year from diarrhoeal diseases. UNICEF will also provide oral rehydration salt sachets to UNRWA-run health facilities and help to organize oral rehydration therapy training programmes for medical personnel in the private sector. Community education in the use of ORT will be supported in association with other interventions, particularly TBA training and water and sanitation activities.

80. The overall expenditures for the implementation of the above programmes during the period from 1988 to 1991, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, are estimated at \$725,000. In addition, a balance of \$159,000 from previous specific purpose contributions will be utilized in 1988.

81. UNICEF plans to employ an international project officer, with support staff, to help to develop further and oversee implementation of the project. Joint UNICEF/WHO EPI/CDD programme reviews will be conducted in 1988 and in 1990 to provide baseline and impact information on PHC services, as well as on the coverage of EPI and CDD. In the water and sanitation project, UNICEF will support baseline and impact assessment surveys in selected villages.

82. Monitoring of the early childhood stimulation project, through direct observation and registration records, will be carried out to determine if the pilot phase has reached its extended targets.

83. Review meetings involving counterparts and collaborating organizations will be held in June and December of each year to analyse progress and implementation constraints and suggest modifications to the subsequent year's plan of action.

#### 5. United Nations Population Fund

84. UNFPA has approved the amount of \$88,000 to support the WHO Collaborating Centres for Primary Health Care Research in the West Bank and Gaza in research and research training in activities related to MCH and health. The long-range objectives of the project are to strengthen the capacity of the health services of the West Bank and Gaza to conduct health systems research at the primary and first referral levels, and to support research projects (including evaluation of services) specifically relating to maternal and child health.

85. Funds allocated are for the local costs of a two-part Health Services Training Workshop and support to five research projects on: (a) identification of major risk factors affecting outcome of pregnancy and childbirth; (b) infant mortality

studies; (c) study of trends and constraints in coverage of hospital delivery (West Bank); (d) knowledge, attitudes and professional practice of health staff concerning health; (e) monitoring and evaluation of a high-risk pregnancy service. The support for the research projects is in the form of technical expertise; costs of data collection; equipment, supplies and health education material for the proposed pilot "high-risk" pregnancy service.

#### H. Social welfare

##### United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

86. It is estimated that, by the end of 1988, out of a total of 183,700 registered refugee families, 8,250 families in the Gaza Strip and 5,170 families in the West Bank will be registered as special hardship cases. Assistance provided to special hardship cases consists of dry food rations, blankets, clothing, small cash grants and repair or reconstruction of shelter. Children from these families are given preferential entry to Agency training centres. Cash grants are given to selected families to establish small enterprises that will enable them to become wholly or partially self-supporting. UNRWA is constantly seeking ways to improve the type and quality of assistance given to special hardship cases.

87. As to assistance to the disabled, a training centre for the blind in Gaza provides education, vocational training and employment in sheltered workshops for some 130 children and adults. The centre is partly funded by donations from non-governmental organizations and individuals. Plans are well advanced for establishing a centre for the treatment and education of the deaf and hard of hearing in Gaza, but are being held in abeyance for lack of funding. Recently, UNRWA co-operated with a non-governmental organization in establishing a small school for deaf children in the West Bank. Disabled persons are placed in institutions run by governmental and non-governmental organizations, many at UNRWA's expense, where they receive specialized care and, for those able to benefit from it, education and vocational training. Proposals for establishing community day-care centres for the mentally disabled, in co-operation with non-governmental organizations, are under consideration.

88. Welfare services are given to all eligible refugees who wish to take advantage of them. The services consist of social counselling, adult education and youth and women's activities. Social counselling is provided by trained welfare workers. Adult education in the form of sewing, embroidery and carpentry courses aims at providing the less educated refugees with marketable skills. It is planned to increase the number of these courses and to provide courses in other skills. Youth and women's activity centres provide facilities for youths and young adults to take part in educational, sporting, cultural and other recreational activities. Several youth centres, however, have been closed for some time.

89. UNRWA plans to carry out much needed construction in support of its welfare programme. This can only be done if special contributions are received. In 1988, \$460,000 is budgeted for the Gaza Strip and \$1,563,000 for the West Bank. Projects

include storm-water and sewage systems, and paving paths in camps, women's sewing and activities centres, an extension to the training centre for the blind and the establishment of a special school and resource centre for the deaf.

#### I. Human settlements

##### United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)

90. UNCHS (Habitat) is preparing an in-depth study on future needs in the infrastructure for the Palestinian people in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 42/190. The report is to be submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session.

91. Pursuant to resolutions 10/13 and 10/14 of the Commission on Human Settlements, UNCHS (Habitat) is also preparing studies on "housing requirements of a future independent Palestinian state on the Palestinian national soil" and on "the reconstruction needed in the Palestinian camps in Lebanon". Both reports are to be submitted to the Commission on Human Settlements at its twelfth session, to be held in April/May 1989.

92. At its eleventh session, the Commission on Human Settlements adopted resolution 11/10 entitled "Reconstruction of Palestinian Houses" in which it, inter alia, requested the Executive Director of UNCHS (Habitat) to assist the Palestinian people in the re-building of their houses which had been "blown up and destroyed" by the occupying authorities. The Executive Director was further requested to report to the Commission at its twelfth session on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution and to provide it with a fuller report at its thirteenth session. UNHCS (Habitat) is in the process of initiating action on the implementation of the above-mentioned resolution 11/10.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

93. The development of the programme, as described above, has been inevitably affected by the tragic events that have occurred in the territories since December 1987. Nevertheless, in spite of serious disruptions in the form of strikes, curfews and violent actions in recent months, measurable progress has been achieved by all United Nations agencies involved. Additional projects have become operational and further projects have been identified, even though the pace of project delivery has been slowed from time to time in specific regions and sectors.

94. From the standpoint of resource-raising, the developments in the territories have had the effect of attracting far greater international attention, and additional funds for development assistance, as well as relief services, have been forthcoming. The needs, however, are still very great and additional funding is urgently needed. The Secretary-General trusts that the international community will continue to increase its support for the programme. As more resources become available, the Secretary-General will continue to implement and develop further the programme pursuant to General Assembly resolution 42/166.

ANNEX

List of organizations and funds addressed for the mobilization  
of resources pursuant to General Assembly resolution 42/166

European Economic Community  
Council for Mutual Economic Assistance  
League of Arab States  
Organization of Islamic Conference  
Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries  
Council of Arab Economic Unity  
Arab Organisation for Agricultural Development  
Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development  
Arab Monetary Fund  
Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa  
Arab Industrial Development Organization  
Inter-Arab Investment Guarantee Corporation  
Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries  
OPEC Fund for International Development  
Islamic Development Bank  
Arab Authority for Agriculture, Investment and Development  
Abu Dhabi Fund for Arab Economic Development  
Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development  
Saudi Fund for Development

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Forty-third session  
Item 12 of the preliminary list\*  
REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND  
SOCIAL COUNCIL

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL  
Second regular session of 1988  
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING  
OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL  
COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES BY THE  
SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND  
THE INTERNATIONAL  
INSTITUTIONS ASSOCIATED  
WITH THE UNITED NATIONS

Assistance to the Palestinian people

Report of the Secretary-General

Corrigendum

Page 6

(a) Paragraph 13 (d) should read

(d) Additionally, ESCWA collaborated with UNCTAD in the preparation of a study on the Palestinian financial sector under Israeli occupation (July 1988) (see para. 16 (a) below).

(b) In paragraph 14 (b) delete (jointly with UNCTAD)

(c) Paragraph 14 (d) should read

(d) Study on Israeli trade and financial practices in the Golan Heights.

\* A/43/50.



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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL  
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PEOPLES BY THE SPECIALIZED  
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INSTITUTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH  
THE UNITED NATIONS

Assistance to the Palestinian people

Report of the Secretary-General

Corrigendum

1. Pages 2 and 4

Heading for Part II. should read

RESPONSE TO THE EMERGENCY RESULTING FROM THE UPRISING OF THE PALESTINIAN  
PEOPLE IN THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

2. Page 6, para. 10

In the first sentence, insert Palestinian before people

3. Paragraphs 10, 14, 17 (b), 18, 36, 38 and 70

For occupied territories read occupied Palestinian territories

4. Page 33, para. 93

First sentence should read

The development of the programme, as described above, has been inevitably  
affected by the uprising of the Palestinian people in the occupied  
Palestinian territories.





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Agenda item 12

### REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

#### Assistance to the Palestinian people

#### Note by the Secretary-General

In its resolution 43/178 of 20 December 1988, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to charge the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) with supervising the development of the programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, and also requested him to report to the Assembly at its forty-fourth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution. The report prepared in response to that request is annexed to the present note.

ANNEX

Assistance to the Palestinian people

1. In its resolution 43/178 of 20 December 1988, entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people", the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to charge the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) with supervising the development of the programme of assistance and to provide it with the funds needed to engage 20 experts to prepare an adequate programme, in close co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization, taking into account the intifadah of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and its implications, and further requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its forty-fourth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution.

2. With a view to implementing the above-mentioned resolution, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) met with representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization and selected experts (a) to discuss the scope of the programme of assistance to the Palestinian people; (b) to identify the specific topics and project proposals to be included in the report to the General Assembly; and (c) to identify also experts who would be requested to prepare the substantive inputs to the report.

3. The meeting agreed on the scope of the programme of assistance and, to that end, identified 30 specific project proposals to be prepared by selected experts. The project proposals were as follows:

- (a) Pilot project for improved packaging of olive oil soap;
- (b) Establishment of a flour mill;
- (c) Strengthening chambers of commerce and industry in the West Bank, Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip;
- (d) Plant for dyeing and printing of textiles;
- (e) Establishment of an agricultural credit institution;
- (f) Plastic sheets for irrigated agriculture;
- (g) Social security fund;
- (h) Establishment of a pressed wood factory;
- (i) Establishment of an infant food production factory;
- (j) Establishment of a factory for food powder and paste production;
- (k) Reconstruction of demolished houses;

- (l) Solving water problems in Gaza;
- (m) Construction of water wells for irrigation and domestic use;
- (n) Factory for the production of paper;
- (o) Fertilizers from recycling of sewage waste;
- (p) Establishment of a housing bank;
- (q) Rehabilitation of the Old City of Jerusalem;
- (r) Development and support of information systems;
- (s) Development of alternative education methods;
- (t) Development of low-cost building materials;
- (u) Development of curriculum for higher educational institutions;
- (v) Provision of technical assistance in land reclamation for cultivation of marginal lands;
- (w) Recycling of scrap metal;
- (x) Improved canning of olive oil;
- (y) Animal feed from olive oil, citrus and other food sediments;
- (z) Development and expansion of mother and child health care centres;
- (aa) Rehabilitation of the disabled;
- (bb) Health/medical insurance fund;
- (cc) Publications on Palestinian history and culture;
- (dd) Dried fruit production.

4. At the time of the preparation of the present report 26 project proposals had been received from the experts who had been requested to prepare them. Summaries of these project proposals are given in the appendix to the report. Summaries of the remaining four project proposals will be submitted to the General Assembly as an addendum to the report as soon as they are received by UNCHS (Habitat).

5. The following is a summary of contributions received from various United Nations organizations and agencies in response to the provisions of resolution 43/178.

United Nations Development Programme

6. During the past 10 years, UNDP has implemented some 18 technical co-operation projects with a total budget of nearly \$5 million in the occupied Palestinian territory. These projects have covered a wide range of fields, but all focus on training and institution building. Currently, UNDP is implementing some 15 projects with a total budget of over \$15 million in the occupied Palestinian territory. The UNDP Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People includes a wide range of projects, including manpower development; industrial development (olive oil, ceramics and glass technology, light industries and vegetable packing); improvement of water supply systems in villages; sewage disposal and effluent recycling; strengthening of educational and health institutions; assistance to the municipalities; and establishment of a business development course.
7. Projects that have been submitted to the Israeli authorities for approval include development of women's institutions (involving 10 productive subprojects to be implemented with women's organizations in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip); and development of the poultry industry.
8. Projects in the process of being formulated include a drip and sprinkle irrigation project; an irrigation and drinking-water project; establishment of marketing centres; a grape-processing project; development of dairy production; assistance to the plastic industry; and assistance to Gaza Strip fishermen (phase II).
9. In addition, UNDP has initiated the following potential projects to be implemented in the occupied Palestinian territory: drinking-water facilities - Gaza Strip; irrigation of Auja area; animal husbandry (livestock); agricultural machinery centres; industrial zone - Gaza; development of drip irrigation equipment; packing, grading and storage facilities for food products; food processing; identification and development of small-scale industries; development of large-scale industries; assistance to municipalities; development of commercial centres; village clinics; ambulance services; development of health institutions; construction of sewage systems; development of training centres for medical technicians; medical specialization fellowships; agricultural vocational training; school buses; and Gaza polytechnic and secretarial courses.
10. A number of countries and organizations are contributing to the implementation of the Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People by means of special contributions, including Canada, Italy, Japan, Tunisia, the United States of America and the Arab Gulf Fund for United Nations Development Organizations. The Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People is directed exclusively to the people in the occupied Palestinian territory. It should be noted that the UNDP Governing Council has sanctioned the Programme to provide both technical and capital assistance in the occupied Palestinian territory. Currently, there are plans to expand the Programme in close collaboration with the PLO, as required by the relevant General Assembly and Economic and Social Council resolutions. It should be noted that UNDP has not provided assistance to Israel since that country voluntarily relinquished its indicative planning figure at the end of the first programming cycle (1972-1976).

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

11. UNRWA provides education, health and relief services to Palestine refugees in the occupied territory of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and in Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and Jordan. A full account of the Agency's activities can be found in the Commissioner-General's report to the General Assembly. 1/ In brief, the UNRWA education programme provides nine grades of general education, vocational and technical training, pre-service and in-service teacher training, and scholarships for higher education. The programme operates with technical assistance from UNESCO. More than 130,000 children attend UNRWA schools in the occupied Palestinian territory. Ninety of the Agency's 98 schools in the West Bank have been closed by order of the Israeli authorities for most of the period of the intifadah, but reopened in July 1989. The 145 UNRWA schools in the Gaza Strip have remained open throughout the intifadah but have been seriously affected by strikes, curfews and disturbances.
12. The UNRWA health programme comprises curative and preventive medical care services, environmental health services in camps and a supplementary feeding service. The programme operates with technical assistance from WHO. Noteworthy recent developments in the West Bank include the construction of a new mother and child health centre at Arroub and the construction of a new surgical ward at the UNRWA hospital at Qalqilia. In the Gaza Strip, noteworthy developments include the establishment of a new dental clinic in the Rimal health centre (in Gaza Town) and two ophthalmic clinics at Jabalia and Khan Yunis.
13. UNRWA's relief programme provides material assistance including food, blankets, clothing and small cash grants to those refugees who are chronically unable to provide for themselves ("special hardship cases"). The Relief Services Department is also responsible for welfare case work, women's activities, adult training courses, education and training of the disabled, promotion of income-generating projects, assistance to refugees in emergency situations and the provision of facilities for pre-school activities. The total budget for UNRWA's regular education, health and relief programmes in the occupied territory in 1989 is around \$87 million.
14. In response to the additional needs created by the intifadah and the Israeli counter measures, UNRWA has introduced a programme of extraordinary measures. The large number of casualties resulting from the intifadah has led to a considerable expansion of the medical programme. Five clinics in Gaza now remain open 24 hours a day and the remainder open in two shifts, while 16 clinics run double shifts in the West Bank. Additional medical supplies and equipment and 13 health buses for the evacuation of casualties have been purchased and the payment of hospital costs and subsidies has been increased. In addition, medical specialists (including two orthopaedic surgeons) have been provided and a physiotherapy programmer, funded mostly by UNICEF, is being run in five clinics in Gaza and one in the West Bank.
15. Welfare services have been expanded to assist the families of those killed, disabled or detained and to cope with the far-reaching economic effects of the intifadah. Additional food is being provided to needy people in both the West Bank and Gaza Strip and around 2,000 needy families have received cash grants. Other

extraordinary measures taken include the expansion of the UNRWA supplementary feeding programme to an additional 38,000 beneficiaries and the provision of general assistance through additional international staff. The budget for the extraordinary measures programme for 1989 is around \$21 million.

16. UNRWA has also launched an expanded programme of assistance comprised of projects to improve living conditions in the occupied territory. A target working figure of \$65 million was set for a period of three years, of which almost \$30 million has already been received or pledged. A high priority in the expanded programme of assistance is to ensure that refugees living in the 27 camps of the West Bank and Gaza Strip have decent shelter and a sanitary environment. Accordingly, substantial efforts are being made in repairing and reconstructing refugee shelters and in upgrading the quality of rehabilitation.

17. The potable water supply situation in Gaza is grave. The two main problems are increasing salinity and sewage pollution due to over-consumption of limited supplies and lack of treatment plants. As part of the expanded programme of assistance UNRWA intends to proceed with the installation of two reverse osmosis desalination plants in the most affected areas, namely, Rafah and Khan Younis. Also included in the expanded programme of assistance are environmental sanitation, sewage and refuse disposal schemes, new and improved health facilities, new and improved centres for women's programmes, expanded self-support and income-generating programmes, training programmes, scholarships, logistics and improvement of service-providing Agency installations.

#### United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

18. During 1988-1989 the work of UNCTAD was concentrated in the following areas: (a) monitoring and analysing policies and measures of the Israeli occupation authorities that affect the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory; (b) investigating the impact of such policies on key economic sectors and examining feasible solutions, including proposals for the provision of technical assistance aimed at promoting the performance of these sectors; and (c) developing the data base for the dissemination of information on the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory. Specific activities include an analysis of recent economic developments in the occupied Palestinian territory (TD/B/1221), which pays special attention to the impact of the Palestinian uprising (intifadah) and related Israeli measures.

19. UNCTAD's in-depth study entitled "Palestinian external trade under Israeli occupation" analyses the performance of external trade and examines the potential for its development. The study provides information for elaborating the scope and functions of a marketing centre planned to be established in the occupied Palestinian territory as a joint venture by UNCTAD, the International Trade Centre and UNDP in the near future. Recent UNCTAD work on the development of a data base on the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory includes "Selected statistical tables on the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory (West Bank and Gaza Strip)" (UNCTAD/RDP/SEU/2); and "Data base extracts of economic issues and related Israeli practices in the occupied Palestinian territory (West Bank and Gaza Strip, 1987-1988)" (UNCTAD/RDP/SEU/3).

United Nations Children's Fund

20. UNICEF assistance to Palestinian children and mothers since 1984 has been concentrated on six sectors: (a) immunization; (b) oral rehydration therapy; (c) the training of traditional birth attendants; (d) the establishment and operation of four child development centres; (e) the training of village health workers; and (f) kindergarten teacher training.

21. Currently, UNICEF is also implementing water and sanitation projects in the most deprived villages of Hebron district in co-operation with the Palestinian Red Crescent Society. In the field of primary health care for refugees in the occupied territories, UNICEF assistance is directed through UNRWA to help extend immunization coverage through the provision of vaccines, syringes and needles, logistic support and cold chain equipment. Furthermore, UNICEF is implementing a physiotherapy project for limb-fractured Palestinian children in Gaza. The project aims at identifying qualified Palestinian physiotherapist who will be given skill-upgrading and placed in a main health centre or hospital of the eight UNRWA camps.

22. The current UNICEF programme cycle (1988-1991) focuses on maintaining and expanding successful experiences in child survival and development to other areas in co-operation with local and foreign non-governmental organizations. Specifically, water and sanitation projects will expand to other deprived areas such as the Jordan Valley, the northern part of the West Bank and Gaza. A self-help early childhood stimulation project will also be initiated as a pilot effort in the West Bank and will be replicated upon evaluation. Owing to the present conditions in the occupied territory, it is feared that immunization and other essential child survival activities have suffered. UNICEF will seek to revitalize these both through UNRWA and the non-governmental organizations operating in the area. UNICEF is also studying possibilities of expanding the Gaza physiotherapy project to the West Bank in co-operation with UNRWA.

23. To fund the current programmes (1988-1991), requiring some \$1,500,000, UNICEF has drawn upon its regular resources to initiate implementation. However, supplementary funds in the order of \$1,000,000 are still required.

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

24. Recent ESCWA activities for the occupied Palestinian territory have focused on the industrial and the livestock resource sectors. A major accomplishment in 1989 was the preparation of a survey of the industrial sector in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This survey aimed at identifying the problems and constraints for industrial development and it included recommendations in order to overcome the major obstacles for industrial development in the occupied territory. Within the livestock resources sector two pre-feasibility studies were prepared in 1989: one for a dairy farm project in the West Bank and the other for an animal breeding station project in the West Bank.

25. In addition, ESCWA, is participating with the Arab Industrial Development Organization (AIDO) and the Economic Department of the PLO in preparations for a solidarity conference with industry in the occupied Palestinian territory. The

conference aims, inter alia, at formulating proposals to encourage industrial development through promotion of selected project profiles and contacting Governments, organizations and individuals to provide technical and financial assistance to industrial development in the occupied territories.

#### International Labour Organisation

26. ILO carries out for the benefit of Arab workers of the occupied territories such activities as lie within its sphere of competence, which cover more specifically freedom of association, freedom from discrimination, employment, vocational training, working conditions, social security and any other aspects that might have repercussions on the Arab workers' working life and job opportunities.

27. The ILO technical co-operation programme is organized primarily around three main subjects: vocational training in general, entrepreneur training and trade union training. Projects in other sectors have also recently been set in motion in relation to activities for women in the field of co-operatives and activities to help the disabled. Further activities are concerned in particular with replacement work that might be necessary as a result of disruptions in the labour market; the vocational integration of persons who have been in prison; occupational safety and health; assistance to organizations for agricultural workers; and extension services. 2/

#### Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

28. FAO is executing two projects aimed at enhancing training for the Palestinian people. Under one of the projects funded by the Near East Co-operative Programme, FAO has organized three post-graduate training fellowships in agricultural economics and animal production. Under the second project, also funded by the Near East Co-operative Programme under the FAO Freedom from Hunger Campaign, FAO provides short-term consultancies and audio-visual equipment to assist the Al-Quds Open University in developing its curriculum and programmes relating to land and community development.

#### United Nations Industrial Development Organization

29. UNIDO has been involved in the development and implementation of a number of technical co-operation projects for the Palestinian people in the occupied territory. Completed projects include a study on the establishment of a Palestinian industrial development bank and a feasibility study on a canning plant for citrus fruit. A project to study the identification of industrial priority projects has now been completed in co-operation with Bir Zeit University in the West Bank. Other recent UNIDO activities include a preparatory assistance project entitled "Assistance to the plastic industry", which aims at defining the requirements for establishing a plastic testing laboratory and a related training programme. In October 1989 UNIDO plans to organize a seminar at Vienna on the Palestinian industrial sector, taking into account the recent economic and other developments in the occupied territory. Other planned activities include a training programme to be conducted at the International Centre for Advanced



Technical and Vocational Training at Turin, Italy, in 1990 and participation in the solidarity meeting with the Palestinian people scheduled to be held in 1989 or early 1990.

#### United Nations Environment Programme

30. UNEP, in co-operation with WHO, formulated the project entitled "Training course on water supply, sanitation and health for environmental health officers working with the Palestinian people". The duration of the project is 25 months, from February 1989 to February 1991, with a total cost of \$57,500.

31. The short-term objective of this project is to facilitate training in pollution control and environmentally sound management of environment-related diseases in the Palestinian refugee camps and settlements in order to control environment-related diseases more effectively. The long-term objective is to improve drinking-water supply, sanitation and food hygiene so as to contribute to the control of diarrhoea and other water-borne diseases in Palestinian refugee camps.

32. At its fifteenth session, the Governing Council of UNEP adopted decision 15/8, entitled "The environmental situation in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories", in which it requested the Executive Director to prepare a comprehensive report on the environmental situation in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories making use of relevant data and information from sources provided by the population of those territories as well as by the States and regional and international organizations concerned. The Executive Director has initiated consultations regarding preparation of the report.

#### World Health Organization

33. At the forty-second World Health Assembly, held in May 1989, two resolutions were adopted, resolution WHA42.1, entitled "Request of Palestine for admission as a member of the World Health Organization", and resolution WHA42.14, entitled "Health conditions of the Arab population in the occupied Arab territories, including Palestine".

34. A WHO mission was sent to the occupied territories from 7 to 20 July 1989 to identify priority health needs with a view to providing intensified assistance to the Palestinian people.

35. A two-year plan of action is under preparation, in consultation with several parties concerned, starting from the last quarter of 1989, with special emphasis on primary health care. The plan will also encompass assistance in strengthening secondary and emergency facilities and the needed health manpower, selected areas of tertiary health care, and emergency and relief operations, as well as in training and research.

United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)

36. Over the past several years, UNCHS (Habitat) has prepared two types of reports each year for submission to the General Assembly and to the Commission on Human Settlements. The first category of reports has been on various aspects of the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory and on assistance to the Palestinian people. These have been prepared pursuant to the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. The second category of reports, prepared pursuant to various resolutions of the Commission on Human Settlements, have been on the housing requirements of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory.

37. The most recent of these reports are:

(a) The report of the Secretary-General prepared for submission to the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly pursuant to resolution 42/190 of 11 December 1987, entitled "Living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories" (A/44/534). In the resolution the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to prepare an in-depth study on future needs in the field of infrastructure for the Palestinian people in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967;

(b) The other report prepared for submission to the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly, that is the present one (A/44/637);

(c) The report of the Executive Director (HS/C/12/2/Add.3), which was submitted to the Commission on Human Settlements at its twelfth session (Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, 24 April to 3 May 1989) pursuant to Commission resolution 10/14, entitled "Shelter for the homeless in the Palestinian camps in Lebanon". The resolution had requested the Executive Director to prepare a study on the reconstruction needed in the Palestinian camps in Lebanon and to submit it to the Commission at its twelfth session;

(d) UNCHS (Habitat) is currently preparing another report pursuant to Commission resolution 12/11, entitled "Housing conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories", in which the Commission requested the Executive Director to devise a national housing development strategy to the year 2000 for the Palestinian people based on the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000, in co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization, including the housing requirements of a future independent Palestinian State and to submit the report to the Commission at or before its thirteenth session.

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

38. UNFPA allocated \$230,780 (1986-1990) to support six fellowships for post-graduate studies in demography and related topics. This project is part of the UNDP-financed programme designed to enhance the educational level of faculty staff for teaching at the universities of the occupied territory.

39. UNFPA allocated \$91,035 in 1987-1988 to support mother and child health research and training activities at the WHO collaborating centres for primary health care research. The long-term objectives of the project were to strengthen the capacity of the health services of the West Bank and Gaza to conduct health systems research at the primary and first referral levels, and to support the undertaking of research projects (including evaluation of services) specifically relating to maternal and child health.

40. UNFPA has allocated \$14,636 to examine the existing information on maternal and reproductive health and health care coverage for Palestine refugees, to draft a plan for an expanded UNRWA mother and child health and feeding programme, and to formulate a project proposal for UNFPA support to implement such a programme. A Project Formulation Workshop on Expanded Maternal Health Programme in the West Bank and Gaza will take place from 21 to 28 September 1989.

41. UNFPA has also funded several technical advisory missions by the ESCWA Regional Adviser in Demography and in Population Statistics to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics to prepare a report on the results of the household income and expenditure survey, to participate in a seminar on the results of this survey and to assist in designing the establishment of a Population and Research Unit in the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. These advisers have also worked with the Joint Jordanian-Palestinian Committee to prepare for the Administrative Survey of the Camps, to train field surveyors, to advise on the establishment of a data bank and to assist in the preparation of a statistical bulletin to be published by the Joint Committee. The technical advisory missions took place during the first six months of 1989 and further assistance will take place before the end of the year.

#### Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/44/13 and Add.1).

2/ For further information on ILO activities relating to the situation of the people of these territories over the past 11 years, see ILO, ILO action on discrimination in employment and occupation (GB.243/CD/3/3), May-June 1989, and ILO, Report of the Director-General, appendixes (vol. 2), seventy-sixth session, 1989, pp. 41-44.

APPENDIX

Summaries of project proposals

1. Production of animal feed from agricultural wastes

Background

1. Animal husbandry in the occupied Palestinian territory is facing serious difficulties. The price of imported feed is escalating, while there is an acute shortage of land available to the Palestinians for intensive grazing or for growing feed crops. At present, feed costs constitute around 50 per cent of total costs of production. Many other agricultural activities, however, produce waste products that are either not used or are used inefficiently. Poultry refuse, corn stalks, olive pulp, and many other "waste" products, which are often ploughed into the land as manure or disposed of as refuse or garbage, could be scientifically treated and mixed to form valuable cattle feed. A plant in Israel, for example, produces feed at \$40 per ton, while an equivalent mixture in the West Bank costs \$178 per ton.

Proposal

2. A project is proposed for the construction of five feed production lines in the West Bank and Gaza. These would produce a total of 50,000 tons of animal feed each year, or about one third of total demand in the occupied Palestinian territory. Each production line would be especially constructed to use the types of input available, and to provide prior treatment to each. Thus, the project would: (a) reduce reliance on imported feed; (b) cut costs of production; and (c) perform a valuable ecological service. The improved profitability would increase local incomes and also strengthen agriculture as an important source of employment. The project would consist of six integrated parts:

(a) The assessment of raw materials in each area and the construction of a feed table composition to suit the materials available in each;

(b) Training local entrepreneurs in the operation and management of the production units;

(c) Training a number of specialists in animal feed nutrition;

(d) Conducting feasibility studies on the establishments of units in each area;

(e) Designing a computer programme to establish the correct mix to be produced;

(f) Establishing and bringing into operation five feed plants.

### Institutional arrangements

3. It is recommended that the Economic Development Group, Jerusalem, be used as the implementing agency for this project, and that a team of scientists be established to work closely with the entrepreneurs in each area. The latter would be responsible for surveys and data collection, and would be trained for their role as future managers of each unit.

### Tentative budget

4. No budget is presented, but it is suggested that finance should be provided by loans, possibly from a revolving fund.

## 2. Promoting the use of fertilizers from recycled sewage

### Background

5. Just over 30 per cent of the land (5,877,963 dunums) of the West Bank is planted. The planted areas include olives (800,000 dunums), vegetables (139,000), grapes (86,000), plums (35,700), citrus (24,500); of the area devoted to vegetables, 65,000 dunums are irrigated. Because of the climate and form of agriculture, it is necessary for West Bank farmers to use fertilizers frequently to maintain the land's fertility. Consequently, large amounts of fertilizer (2,000 tons of organic fertilizer, and 3,000 of inorganic) are imported each year. Some 20 to 25 million cubic metres of water are used annually for purposes other than irrigation, of which around 75 per cent could be recycled. This could add 20 to 25 thousand dunums to the irrigated land and provide 20 to 25 thousand tons of organic fertilizers. Fortunately, it is possible to design treatment plants to suit both the amount of sewage to be treated and the use to which the output is to be applied. This makes it possible for plants to be supplied for small and large communities, each benefiting from both the resultant fertilizers and the effluent for irrigation.

### Proposal

6. It is proposed to promote a widening of the irrigated areas for the cultivation of vegetables, fruit and animal feed, to encourage the growth of agro-industry utilizing the resulting products, to improve the methods of sewage disposal in both the West Bank and Gaza, and to use the methane gas generated by sewage treatment. It is proposed that studies be undertaken to cover villages and towns to estimate the size of facilities needed in each. It is suggested that this, as well as much of the engineering work required for the project's eventual implementation, is within the capacity of the local community, with perhaps some outside expert assistance.

### Institutional arrangements

7. It is recommended that a co-operative or company be established to develop the project. Although outside expert assistance will be required at the investigation and design stage, the local communities should be involved as much as possible.

### Tentative budget

8. Some small pilot projects have already been established that indicate that trickling filter systems of from 2 to 60 cubic metres capacity per day would cost between \$2,200 and \$13,100, whereas a system for a major city on the West Bank would cost from \$5 to \$10 million.

### 3. Reclamation of marginal lands for cultivation

#### Background

9. Cultivable land is extremely scarce in the occupied Palestinian territory and the position has been exacerbated by the settlement policies and military activities of the occupying Power. There is much marginal land in the territory, however, which with judicious treatment could be brought into production. This land may constitute as much as 20 per cent of the total land area, and falls into three categories:

(a) Rocky lands, which may prove cultivable after removal of stones;

(b) Steep mountainous lands, which have poor access and are too steep for the use of tractors;

(c) Saline lands, usually in low-level areas made saline by over-use of brackish well water, or by saline intrusion.

Most Palestinian agriculture is labour intensive and organized on a family basis, and increasing the amount of land available to family farms would provide far more stable employment than that generally available, especially for those at present commuting to Israel. It would also encourage female employment, as custom prevents Palestinian women working on other lands, but encourages them to work on family holdings.

#### Proposal

10. It is proposed that a project for extensive land reclamation be established, to be run by a number of agricultural advisors, who would: (a) organize an information system and encourage farmers to take part in the project; (b) visit the land of those applying for assistance to check its feasibility and to advise on cropping and cultivation patterns; (c) assess costs and determine the proportion of costs to be borne by the farmer; (d) supervise the actual work undertaken; and (e) monitor outputs and quality, and advise on possible improvements. Equipment and staff for earth-moving activities will also be made available.

#### Institutional arrangements

11. Many facilities already exist for the implementation of this project. Labour is no problem and technical ability is available through a number of sources. Only a minimal amount of outside assistance on modern technical matters would be

required. A number of marketing co-operatives have already engaged in land reclamation and it is suggested that the project be implemented under the aegis of the co-operative movement, with technical assistance being provided through the universities and the Rural Research Centre. As the co-operatives are already licensed, no further licensing will be required, but licences for the importation of capital and machinery would need to be obtained.

#### Tentative budget

12. Needs would be as follows:

#### United States dollars

##### Equipment

12 bulldozers	840 000
12 trucks	<u>720 000</u>
Total	<u>1 560 000</u>

##### Annual operating costs

30 drivers	120 000
31 agricultural advisers (25 junior, 6 senior)	250 000
Chemicals, operational costs, transport, premises, etc.	<u>750 000</u>
Total	<u>1 120 000</u>

#### 4. An agricultural credit institution

##### Background

13. The economic growth of the occupied Palestinian territory has been greatly restricted by the conditions of the occupation, especially by restrictions on the institutions providing development capital. Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy in the territory, accounting for 30 per cent of the gross domestic product and employing around 20 per cent of the working population. The appropriation of land, the restrictions on water use and on cropping patterns, and the lack of effective institutions, including financial institutions, have precluded any meaningful development and caused continual population drift from agriculture into other employment. Only Israeli banks have been allowed to establish themselves and even they have closed down because of the intifadah.

### Proposal

14. It is proposed that an agricultural credit institution be established and that it be made responsible for providing development assistance in the form of finance, technical advice, marketing aid and information, assistance in irrigation scheme development, and research and advice on the use of fertilizers and machinery, thus offering a full range of credit facilities to agriculture. Detailed investigations should first be carried out to establish the specific needs of the Palestinian farmers, on a quantitative as well as qualitative basis, and suitable financial sources should be identified and the shortcomings of existing conditions made clear. Only then should an appropriate corporation be formed, with its own headquarters, and the institution actually brought into being.

### Institutional arrangements

15. The credit institution should be organized in the same way as any other of a similar nature, with trustees or a board of directors. It is suggested that its finance could be raised from deposits, international soft loans, loans from foreign banks and other sources. Above all, it should be conducted within agreed conditions of financial soundness and its loans conform to rules of prudence, being spread between long- and short-term, and covering a spectrum of fixed and revolving investments.

### Tentative budget

16. It is considered that an initial capital of \$20 million would need to be raised. Loans are expected to reach between \$15-20 million quickly and to increase as capital is turned over. Consequently, the raising of capital would be an initial priority. Soft loans, however, should be regarded as for initial establishment purposes only, and the institution would be expected to exist on its own merits at the earliest opportunity. The initial costs of the establishment are likely to be around \$1 million and annual operating costs around \$600,000.

## 5. Wells in the West Bank

### Background

17. The West Bank occupies an important position in the pattern of hydrological interrelationships of the region. It receives far more rain than it uses, and the strata into which the surplus percolates slope westward, charging the aquifers from which Israel draws a substantial proportion of its water supply. The two sources of water in the West Bank are: (a) surface water, including springs and seeps, an intermittent source that cannot be relied on for regular supply, and storage schemes are not feasible; and (b) ground water, which is a stable source, supplying 32 million cubic metres annually for irrigation and 19.4 cubic metres for domestic purposes. The later is considered the only reasonable source from which to increase supplies and, although the upper aquifers are already fully exploited, lower deep-seated aquifers are extensive and capable of further exploitation. Since necessary developments in both agriculture and industry are crucially dependent on water, it is imperative that this supply be increased. Deep drilling is considered the only way capable of providing that increase.



### Proposal

18. The project envisages a sequential approach to the problem, consisting of the following steps:

(a) A water sector study to establish future needs, their geographical pattern and constraints, and to establish priorities;

(b) Formation of a regional water master plan outlining extraction and distribution development in the light of future anticipated needs;

(c) Consequent upon the results of the above steps, upgrading existing wells and digging appropriate new ones;

(d) Installation of appropriate pumping facilities and distribution networks.

These four groups of activities require a series of tasks and sub-tasks covering project mobilization, data collection, project planning, engineering design and project implementation.

### Institutional arrangements

19. Under current conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory, all water works must be approved by the West Bank Water Authority, accountable to the Israeli military occupation authorities. To date, this has proved extremely difficult and few approvals, even for upgrading facilities, have been given. Some international organizations have been permitted to establish storage reservoirs, however, and it is recommended that they be asked to extend their activity to cover new and existing wells. It is also imperative that a Palestinian water authority be established to oversee the planning and execution of this and other projects in the occupied Palestinian territory, and that technical and financial assistance be sought from appropriate aid agencies.

## 6. Solution of water problems in the Gaza Strip

### Background

20. Water is a crucial resource in the Gaza Strip, especially as, because of the geographical and intermittent distribution of rainfall, the area has to rely on subterranean aquifers to provide both distribution and storage. The Gaza Strip is a narrow strip of land, about 8 kilometres wide, stretching 45 kilometres along the sea, so that any over-exploitation of the ground water quickly results in saline intrusion. This has been taking place over recent years, to such an extent that the salinity of much of the supply is far in excess of internationally accepted norms and the consequences for health and agricultural productivity are very serious. Although the demand of the indigenous population already exceeds the rate of recharge, the Israeli authorities have been sinking wells to provide for their settlements and to supply their own national water carrier, thus further aggravating the situation.

Proposal

21. A project is proposed to undertake the following activities:

(a) A water sector study to identify potential requirements and define priorities and plans of action;

(b) A master plan for water extraction and distribution in the light of projected agricultural, industrial and household requirements;

(c) The installation of desalination plants to treat salty ground water and sea water;

(d) A long-term programme to control sea-water intrusion and other contamination of the aquifers;

(e) The construction of water retention schemes for aquifer recharge;

(f) The installation of appropriate desalination facilities.

Institutional arrangements

22. It is proposed that a Palestinian water authority be established to oversee this and other water projects and plans. In particular, it is felt that water consumption will require a change in agricultural working patterns. This must be achieved in a co-ordinated way. In addition to local planners and engineers, appreciable assistance would be necessary from United Nations agencies and others. In particular, technical assistance and funding would be required.

Tentative budget

23. Needs are estimated as follows:

	<u>United States dollars</u>
Surveys and studies	230 000
Six desalination plants	1 680 000
Miscellaneous	<u>286 500</u>
Total	<u><u>2 196 500</u></u>

7. Flour mill at Nablus

Background

24. The daily consumption of flour in the West Bank is around 750 tons. Prior to 1980, there were two flourmills in the area satisfying at least part of this demand. However, both mills became obsolete and this, together with lack of proper

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management, caused their closure. Since then the region has relied entirely on flour supplied by Israel.

#### Proposal

25. It is proposed to reactivate one of these mills at Nablus, equip it with modern machinery and bring it into production with a daily output of around 1,000 tons of flour and 25 tons of bran. In doing so, this mill would create employment, form an outlet for some agricultural production and thus diversify local agriculture, improve self-reliance and provide raw material for other food industries. Initially, the mill might have to depend on grain from Israeli silos, but its existence would encourage Palestinian farmers to diversify their crops. The following activities are considered necessary:

- (a) Investigation of sources of supply and establishing their dependability;
- (b) Preparation of a feasibility study of the project's profitability;
- (c) Selection of consultants for the design of a modern facility;
- (d) Ordering equipment and training operators abroad;
- (e) Renovation of the existing mill;
- (f) Recruitment of manpower;
- (g) Installation of equipment and commissioning the mill.

#### Institutional arrangements

26. It is suggested that under current political conditions the mill would best be organized and run by private enterprise, with some 30 to 40 investors from the West Bank forming the implementing agency, together with existing owners, supplemented with outside finance. The agency would need to be able to present a detailed feasibility study to the authorities covering all aspects of the project, including raw materials. It would need to renew the old mill's licence and also re-register the old company or register a new one. Feasibility and engineering studies, therefore, are an essential part of the project.

#### Tentative budget

27. Needs are estimated as follows:

	<u>United States dollars</u>
Feasibility studies, engineering design, and mobilization	150 000
Equipment, installation, renovation work	3 800 000

## 8. Dried fruit production

### Background

28. Fruit production forms a major part of agricultural activity in the occupied Palestinian territory. Some 197,000 tons are produced annually in the West Bank, with a significant proportion of citrus fruits, bananas, grapes, figs, peaches, apricots, apples, plums, and guavas; and 174,000 tons in Gaza, mainly citrus, but with some grapes and guava also. Palestinian fruit production shows a high return per hectare; it is rain-fed and labour-intensive. It also provides much work for women, and is a particularly useful activity for land reclamation, but because of marketing problems and current political conditions, crops often remain unsold or are sold at very low prices. There is a great need, therefore, to open up new markets for Palestinian fruit, and to encourage fruit in the occupied Palestinian territory to exploit those markets.

### Proposal

29. A project is proposed for the introduction of dried fruit production as a way of creating a basis for a new market. Properly dried fruit can be transported easily, and has a long shelf life, while drying significantly increases the value-added component. Using the low-technology labour-intensive methods proposed by the project, this increased value added will accrue largely to the farmer and will reduce the risk of perishability of fruit in its raw state. Extensive trials have already been carried out with low-technology driers. The project includes the design and building of 200 solar driers, suitable for operation at farm level to train farmers in their use, and to investigate the possibility of installing solar driers to operate at village level. The types of drier envisaged, at least at farm level, will be capable of construction by local labour with minimal training. Each drier would provide the operating family with an income of \$660 per annum. The preparation of construction and operation manuals for solar driers, the training of carpenters in their construction and of women in their operation, a research study on a drier for village-level operation and a study to establish a comparative efficiency of farm and village-level operations are also recommended.

### Institutional arrangements

30. The Economic Development Group, Jerusalem, is the ideal institution for implementing this project, as all that is proposed is already permitted by its existing 1987 registration with the Israeli authorities to promote entrepreneurial development in the West Bank and Gaza through the provision of loans, identification of business opportunities, technical assistance and feasibility studies.

Tentative budget

31. Needs will be as follows:

United States dollars

Salaries of the project team, research, operating expenses	60 000
Building of 200 solar driers (through a revolving fund)	50 000

9. Production of powder and paste foods

Background

32. Since the beginning of the intifadah and the boycott of Israeli products, there has been a marked increase in the packaging of powder and paste foods (tomato paste, homus, instant pudding and so on) in the occupied Palestinian territory. With one or two exceptions, production has been on a small scale and conducted in an inefficient manner. Marketing has been poor and the products have suffered from poor handling. The agricultural sector could provide significant inputs into this sector of industry, but because of lack of technological ability and of organizations, this is at present not possible. Small-scale packers rely on Israeli sources for their bulk supplies. There is a wide variety of products suitable for processing and many are produced in the occupied Palestinian territory. These could be processed locally, adding significantly to the total value.

Proposal

33. It is proposed that a study be first carried out to decide which of the major products offer the most promising return. Based on this, further feasibility studies would be undertaken to assess the viability of a project in that area of the market before proceeding with the design and construction of a plant.

Institutional arrangements

34. The present production and packaging units are all operating in the private sectors. In spite of difficulties, they have shown significant capability. It is suggested, therefore that the project be concentrated in this sector, and a type of co-operative organization set up through which nominated advisers could work, and finance be disbursed.

Tentative budget

35. Needs would be as follows:

United States dollars

Initial studies and design	111 500
Construction of buildings and installation of machinery	500 000

10. Improved canning of olive oil

Background

36. About 40 per cent of the total agricultural area in the West Bank is covered by olive trees, which produce about 35,000 tons of oil in an average year. Some 6,000 tons are used locally and the remainder is exported. The crop is gathered and processed during three months of the year. The arrangements for filtering, storage and packing are very poor. The oil is generally placed in 17 kilogram cans and in this form cannot compete in a potentially lucrative market with oil packed in smaller containers, attractively labelled and generally ready for the supermarket shelf. It is either sold cheaply in bulk or repacked by others who cream off a substantial part of the profit.

Proposal

37. It is proposed that a project to upgrade the quality of oil be implemented, concentrating on efficient filtering, storage and packaging in a manner more suitable for presentation in its final markets. Subject to a detailed feasibility study, it is suggested that between one and three factories be established in the major oil-producing areas of Ramallah, Nablus and Tulkarm. Each factory should be equipped to check oil for its quality and to filter and treat it before it proceeds to packaging. A detailed study would recommend the sizes and range of packages to be used. When filled, they would be labelled, packed or crated and stored for later shipment.

Institutional arrangements

38. It is suggested that the project be organized through the Union of Olive Oil Producers, which consists almost entirely of farmers and operates in conjunction with the agricultural co-operatives on the West Bank. A detailed investigation of the markets and their needs is a prerequisite for further detailed planning. There would also be a need to arrange training for staff through co-operative agencies.

Tentative budget

39. The machinery for each factory is likely to cost around \$1 million. The annual running costs would be in the region of \$1,750,000. This should be raised

by the Union and the co-operatives, and the project would be self-financing, subject to initial inputs to cover the proposed studies.

#### 11. Improved packaging of olive oil soap

##### Introduction

40. Olive oil soap has been produced in significant quantities in the occupied Palestinian territory, especially in the Nablus area, for over 100 years. It has always been a labour-intensive family activity, using primitive methods. About 4,500 tons of soap are produced annually, but although originally based on local oils, much oil is now imported because of the high demand for the low-acid Palestinian oil for edible uses. The soap is produced by boiling oil with caustic soda and water. The resultant viscous product is spread on the floor to solidify, and cut into sections for packing. When hardened, it is wrapped manually, glued and packed in jute sacks for transport to the markets. Until the late 1950s this was virtually the only soap used locally and it was used widely in surrounding countries. However, attitudes have altered and soap that is more attractively presented and wrapped has eroded the markets for the Palestinian olive oil soap.

##### Proposal

41. A project is proposed to introduce new wrapping methods in order to meet the demand for more attractive presentation, taking advantage of the current demand for "natural" products, exploiting the fact that the main ingredients are all from natural sources.

##### Institutional arrangements

42. It is suggested that the project be centred at Nablus and that existing entrepreneurs in the soap industry form the main executive agency on a private enterprise basis. In the simplest case where it is possible to upgrade the packaging of existing outputs, this should present no problem. If studies show the need for upgraded production methods, however, then further permits would be needed for buildings and machinery importation.

##### Tentative budget

43. Suggested costs for a market study and machinery for initial demonstration purposes are:

	<u>United States dollars</u>
Feasibility study	20 000
Wrapping/taping machinery	32 000

However, these sums are suggested on the assumption that the study shows that better packaging will be sufficient to lift market shares to the desired levels.

Should it prove necessary to alter production techniques, a new cost structure would need to be prepared.

## 12. Pressed wood production factory

### Background

44. In the occupied Palestinian territory, there are some 843 production units in the carpentry and furniture industries. Small in scale, they employ around 2,334 workers; only 21 units employ 8 or more, while 286 are one-man establishments. They use exclusively raw materials imported from Israel and are at a serious disadvantage in their own market. Their by-products of off-cuts, sawdust and shavings are at present unused. A modern pressed wood plant would serve to reduce reliance on foreign imports, save foreign exchange, use indigenous raw materials at present going to waste, provide employment and help diversify the Palestinian economy.

### Proposal

45. A project is proposed for the establishment of a factory that would produce some 60 cubic metres of pressed wood boards per day. In different forms, these would be used for furniture and internal construction (walls, panelling, ceilings, floorings, doors and so on). A feasibility study is recommended to assess both the optimal levels of each type of output and the size of the diverse markets, and to ascertain possible sources and types of raw material and the optimal methods of processing them. The establishment of such a factory would help to transform the woodworking activities of the occupied Palestinian territory into a more integrated industry and, by reducing costs and providing an output for waste, at present valueless, would enable the industry to develop on a modern basis capable of competing in foreign markets. Even prior to the proposed feasibility study, it is safe to assert that the establishment would require about 10 dunums of land, on part of which the manufacturing plant would be constructed; it would employ some 50 workers, and would utilize the wastes from woodworking establishments as about 30 per cent of its material input and the remaining 70 per cent would be imported as cheap logs, split timbers, etc.

### Institutional arrangements

46. It is suggested that the proposed factory be established at Hebron, which gives the best access to other parts of the territory where the sources of raw materials and final markets are scattered. The establishment of a company, as well as the construction of the factory, the importation of the plant and raw materials, would require prior permits from the occupying authorities.



Tentative budget

47. Specimen costs for such an establishment would be of the following order:

United States dollars

Studies and initial expenses	60 000
Land, buildings and plant	4 440 000
Working capital	200 000

Running costs can be worked out only after a more detailed study of the proposed plant and its manner of operation and administration.

13. Factory for the production of paper

Background

48. At present, there is no production of non-absorbent paper in the occupied Palestinian territory. The production of absorbent paper relies to a large extent on imported inputs, mostly from Israel. The estimated total demand is around 9,000 tons per annum, of which 55 per cent is for writing and printing paper, 40 per cent for tissues, including toilet paper, and the remainder for newsprint, board and wrapping. As well as being a serious burden on the balance of payments, this importation denies Palestinian workers possible employment. It also denies farmers the opportunity to earn extra income by producing wood crops on poor ground.

Proposal

49. It is proposed that a project be implemented for a factory to operate two production lines, one for writing and printing paper, the other for tissues, thus supplying 95 per cent of total demand for these items in the occupied Palestinian territory. There would be some surplus for export and a marketing arm is suggested at Amman. In the short term, the plant would continue to rely on imported raw materials, but it should be the policy of management to encourage growth of suitable woods locally to secure long-term inputs. A suggested site for the establishment would be near Bethlehem, owing mainly to its proximity to Ashod, through which initial supplies would need to be imported. About 10,000 square metres of land would be required and buildings covering 5,000 square metres for production and storage. The direct employment would total 100.

Institutional arrangements

50. A committee should be formed to oversee the initial phases of the plant's establishment. Activities during these phases would include a detailed assessment of the market to ascertain the required outputs of the two production lines, the securing of licences from the occupying authorities, the final decision on siting and detailed designs and decisions on buildings and machinery needed. The committee would investigate sources of finance, register the company and recruit

shareholders. A management committee elected by the shareholders should then take over the remaining development and, eventually, the responsibility for operational activities. It is suggested that appropriate United Nations and other agencies be approached to provide training and advisory assistance.

#### Tentative budget

51. The factory would be financed by private capital, and a sum of around \$5 million is suggested as a likely requirement to cover the cost of land, buildings, machinery, a working capital of \$1 million and establishment expenses. This would need to be raised, or sources ascertained, by the establishing committee, but a 50 per cent shareholding, 50 per cent loan system would appear reasonable.

### 14. Plant for dyeing and printing of textiles

#### Background

52. The textile and clothing sector ranks third (after metals and wood fabrication) in the manufacturing sector of the Palestinian economy. It employs around 22 per cent of the corresponding work-force of 10,700 and is characterized by small units (in all about 470, 83 per cent of which employ between 1 and 7 persons). The industry is concentrated almost wholly on the West Bank, where it accounts for 65 per cent of the manufacturing work-force in the Tulkarm area, 30 per cent in the Nablus area and 17 per cent around Ramallah. The industry is labour-intensive, with a low output per employee, around \$4,000 per annum. In turn, this is reflected in low labour remuneration, with an average daily wage of around \$4. Current dyeing activity is concentrated in the south, among three main dyers. These can only satisfy around 10 per cent of current demand and, because of both political and physical restrictions (lack of water and inadequate sewage facilities), they have no scope for expansion.

#### Proposal

53. The proposal is to establish a facility in the north, near Tulkarm (with a possible increase later to two or three plants to serve the other main centres). Here, both water supply and waste disposal facilities are deemed adequate, and labour supply is plentiful, owing to restrictions on mobility and downturn in other sectors. The plant proposed would cater for the textile and clothing sector, that is, non-industrial fabrics, and would cover fabric preparation, vat dyeing and screen printing. Employment would be for 30 operators, 3 supervisors, 1 chemist and 1 manager. The land required would be around 5,000 square metres and buildings covering around 2,000 square metres.

#### Institutional arrangements

54. It is recommended that a controlling office for the project be set up at Jerusalem, at least during the development stage, to facilitate the acquisition of licences and planning agreements. A detailed feasibility study should be carried out at the same time as the licensing negotiations are conducted. Meanwhile, the

financial structure of the controlling organizations should be established through the Jerusalem office and investment from various appropriate sources sought and co-ordinated.

Tentative budget

55. The estimated cost of the total fixed investment is \$3,411,000, plus working capital of 10 per cent, that is \$3,752,000 in all. Estimated annual production costs are \$1,929,600.

15. Scrap-steel recycling plant

Background

56. Local wholesalers estimate that the demand for steel in the occupied Palestinian territory is around 210,000 tons per annum. At present, this is imported from Israel, giving that country a complete monopoly on the territory's steel market. The territory is estimated to produce about 6,600 tons of scrap per year, which could be recycled if an appropriate plant were available.

Proposal

57. It is recommended that a detailed feasibility study be carried out into the possibilities for establishing such a plant in the occupied Palestinian territory. Initial indications are that such a plant could be profitable. The 6,600 tons of scrap would need to be melted and mixed with imported steel to produce 57,800 tons of fabricated steel for the Palestinian market each year, at a sale price of \$475 per ton.

Institutional arrangements

58. It is recommended that a committee be set up to carry out this feasibility study, and also to bring the plant to the operational stage if the study shows that the project is in fact feasible. The plant should be run as a private company undertaking, and it would be the responsibility of the committee to seek appropriate shareholding and other finance. Until the company is formed, however, it would assume the duties of management normally undertaken by a board of directors.

Tentative budget

59. Needs are estimated as follows:

	<u>United States dollars</u>
Investment cost including land, buildings, machinery, equipment and miscellaneous	6 269 000
Operating costs including scrap steel, reinforced steel, labour and miscellaneous	23 619 000

The estimated annual revenue would be \$27,455,000.

16. Reconstruction of demolished Palestinian homes

Background

60. Housing has consistently been one of the most neglected sections of the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory. Over 30 per cent of the population live in one-room units, with an average of seven persons per unit. The problem has been exacerbated by the practice of the occupying authorities of destroying houses as a reprisal for contravention of Israeli regulations, by their refusal to grant building permits even in most severe cases of need and by destruction of dwellings constructed without permission. This last category includes temporary shelters constructed alongside homes to cater for expanding families. In 1988 alone, it is estimated that the value of houses destroyed was some \$6 million and current estimates indicate that destructions in 1989 will exceed this figure. In addition to the need for a general upgrading of the existing housing stock, it is estimated that around 50,000 new houses per annum need to be built over the coming few years to overcome the severe and growing shortage.

Proposal

61. A project is proposed aimed at the reconstruction of homes destroyed and a consequent alleviation of the crucial housing shortage. It is proposed that:

(a) A survey of all homes destroyed in the last three years and estimates of their cost of reconstruction be made;

(b) Local executing organizations for the project, with a central co-ordinating committee, be established;

(c) A phased action plan be developed with a set of engineering plans for homes to be rebuilt;

(d) A preliminary master plan be prepared for the localities to assist in obtaining licences.

Institutional arrangements

62. It is recommended that a qualified planning team drawn from appropriate Palestinian organizations should be formed to carry out the above tasks. A central co-ordinating committee should organize the raising of the necessary finance.

Tentative budget

63. During the first 2 years, it is estimated that 240 houses would be built. Costs incurred in this period are likely to be of the following order:

United States dollars

Field survey and master plan preparation	90 000
Engineering design and supervision	120 000
Building construction (200 units) and contingency	<u>500 000</u>
Total	<u>710 000</u>

17. Rehabilitation of the Old City of Jerusalem

Background

64. The Palestinian society in the Old City of Jerusalem is in danger of collapse owing to the deterioration of the physical and social conditions. This deterioration is due to: (a) redevelopment of the Jewish quarter and extension of Jewish intrusion into the Muslim quarter; (b) the rapid growth of the Israeli sector, which has diminished the importance of the Old City as a Palestinian commercial centre; (c) the growth of settlements around the city severing links between the Old City and the rest of the Palestinian area; (d) discriminatory development policies of the occupying authorities; and (e) uncertainty concerning the area's future.

Proposal

65. A project is proposed with the objective of preparing the ground for an overall development plan that would enable funding agencies to direct their efforts to the most effective projects. It would take into account the serious deterioration of the environment at present taking place and would include: (a) an examination of the dynamics of emigration from the Old City; and (b) a detailed survey of the socio-economic conditions prevailing there. Within the Old City there is a strong cadre of architects, engineers and archaeologists working within Islamic organizations, whose expertise would form an integral part of any programme of rehabilitation and whose input to the project would be invaluable. It is suggested that their mobilization within this project would in itself be a valuable contribution to the wider aim of strengthening the social fabric of the Arab citizenry.

Institutional arrangements

66. It is suggested that the project be implemented through the Arab Thought Forum, a body which is independent of any Government, political party or organization. Its independence has enabled it to develop a unique role as an

intermediary between foreign governmental and non-governmental organizations and the Palestinian people. It has offices in East Jerusalem and its organization is made up of four units: (a) the research unit, which organizes conferences and workshops in the community to assess needs, to apply professional scrutiny to research proposals and outputs, and to prepare project profiles on request for international organizations; (b) the feasibility studies unit, operating on behalf of local and international bodies; (c) the development education unit to extend development education and promote community awareness of it; and (d) the data base unit aimed at providing comprehensive facilities for research and planning.

#### Tentative budget

67. If the project is undertaken through the Arab Thought Forum, the costs would be around \$20,000.

### 18. Housing bank for the occupied Palestinian territory

#### Background

68. The low rate of economic growth in the occupied Palestinian territory has resulted in low rates of savings and investment in housing development. The policies of the occupying administration are also exacerbating housing problems. Current density is over 2.5 inhabitants per room. There is now a shortfall of some 70,000 housing units; a shortfall that will be increased by the return of large numbers of Palestinians when conditions are normalized. The development of a housing programme to cater for the anticipated need is therefore considered to be vital.

#### Proposal

69. It is not possible for a full-fledged housing bank to be established under existing conditions. Nevertheless, it is suggested that a number of studies be undertaken to provide essential information on housing construction costs, appropriate technology, environmental and conservation matters to be considered, sources of financial capital and the income sources and family structure of potential beneficiaries from the bank's establishment in due course. The results of these studies would then form the basis of a full feasibility study prior to the formation of a housing bank. Such a study would also determine the size, scope, location, capital available and required, and the lending and operating policy of the bank.

#### Institutional arrangements

70. As an interim measure, it is suggested that the setting up of a new non-profit-making company be investigated as a possibility to work as a credit foundation with other existing Palestinian organizations. The board of the company could then oversee the preparation of the studies proposed and later could be responsible for bringing the bank into being as soon as circumstances allow. The administrative and supervisory functions for the required studies could be provided by the Arab Thought Forum, Jerusalem.

Tentative budget

71. Costs are estimated as follows:

	<u>United States dollars</u>
Five pre-feasibility studies	50 000
Feasibility study	15 000
Workshops, transport and communications	10 000
Administrative costs	<u>15 000</u>
Total	<u>90 000</u>

19. Strengthening chambers of commerce and industry in the occupied Palestinian territory

Background

72. Since the Israeli occupation in 1967 there has been no indigenous means whereby the Palestinian people could formulate development policies or exercise control over their economic affairs.

Proposal

73. A project is proposed that would result in a development plan being formulated so that the various sectors of the economy could direct their investment and their development activities in a meaningful and co-ordinated manner. Within this plan an industrialization strategy would be formulated and assistance and advice made available to entrepreneurs and the general public. The formation of an economic and central planning council is suggested to promote feasibility studies and marketing and development plans, to set standards of product quality, to organize foreign exhibitions and trade missions, to organize liaison between Palestinian and other chambers of commerce, to monitor and advise on tax matters, to play a role in the monetary policy in the occupied Palestinian territory (in particular the monetary relationship between the territory and Jordan), and to publish regular reports and studies.

Institutional arrangements

74. It is suggested that the above tasks be organized within the Union of Chambers of Commerce, as most of them, if not all, are already permitted within the chambers' constitutions, and it should not be unreasonable for them to be granted further permits from the occupying authorities. Thus, the chambers, through their union, should be strengthened as an integral part of this project by setting up departments at the union's headquarters commensurate with the diverse tasks outlined.

### Tentative budget

75. The setting up of appropriate departments is likely to cost approximately \$400,000 and annual running costs would amount to some \$750,000.

## 20. Social security fund

### Background

76. At the time of the occupation of the Palestinian territory by Israel in 1967, there were no meaningful social security arrangements, either in Jordan or in Egypt, both of whom administered parts of the territory. However, these two countries, together with a large number of other countries throughout the world, including Israel, now operate social security systems covering health care and hospital provision, sickness and employment support payments, and old age pensions. In contrast, the occupied Palestinian territory does not have the benefit of any social security provision, although the Palestinian worker is required to pay levies on his employment income comparable with those of workers in Israel who receive social security benefits from the funds so provided.

### Proposal

77. The following is proposed: (a) an investigation of the existing social and economic conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory and the establishment of norms commensurate with standards acceptable on an international plane; (b) an investigation of sources of finance for the establishment of an appropriate fund for the guarantee of an agreed minimum standard of living, health care and social security; and (c) an investigation of the possibility of the fund being administered as a charity under suitable international auspices.

### Institutional arrangements

78. The development of an institutional framework should proceed in three stages: (a) the development of a technical office, which would oversee the co-ordination of the fund's establishment; (b) the formation of a constituent society of representatives from co-operatives, legal societies, unions, chambers of commerce, etc., to develop the administration of the fund and disbursements from it; and (c) the establishment of a board of trustees to oversee and pursue the ongoing administration of the fund.

### Tentative budget

79. A realistic budget for the fund during its operation cannot be established at this stage, and would need to be investigated thoroughly as part of the early responsibilities of the technical office and the constituent society. However, financing for the first year of the establishment of the technical office, during



which much of the initial work recommended would be undertaken, would be in the region of \$50,000, as indicated below:

	<u>United States dollars</u>
Salaries and wages for one year	26 000
Office equipment	11 000
Running expenses	<u>13 000</u>
Total	<u>50 000</u>

#### 21. Health security fund

##### Background

80. There is an acute shortage of health facilities and services in the occupied Palestinian territory; the low-income population in particular is unable to meet the cost of health care. Doctors' fees are \$10 per visit and hospitalization charges run to \$200 daily. Present health security systems include: (a) government health security, mainly for public employees, which is characterized by poor medical service, lack of medicine, hospital overcrowding and infrequent specialist care; (b) health insurance companies, mainly for institutions and high-income people, which offer only a limited coverage, high overhead costs and need a heavy subsidy; and (c) private health security funds, such as that applied for Al-Najah University since 1985 and at the Hebron Technical Engineering College since 1986. This last example could be used as a model for the proposed health security fund.

##### Proposal

81. It is proposed to establish a health security fund initially for low- and middle-income workers. The coverage would include both regular and chronic cases up to an annual maximum of \$3,000 for the subscriber, the same amount for the spouse and \$2,000 for each child. Annual fees would be \$200 for the subscriber, the same for the spouse and \$100 for each child. A prerequisite of the scheme is that two thirds of the fees would be subsidized.

##### Institutional arrangements

82. It is proposed to establish a committee for the health security fund, to administer and supervise the fund, consisting of representatives from the Arab Economic Association, the Doctors' Union in the West Bank, the Pharmacists' Union in the West Bank, the Medical Association in the Gaza Strip, the General Workers' Union in the West Bank, and any other organizations concerned with the provision of health services to workers and their families. The donor organization or agency subsidizing the fund would be represented as appropriate.

Tentative budget

83. Assuming a total of 1,000 participants for the first year, 75 per cent of whom are married, and an average number of 6 children per participant, the revenue of the fund would be allocated as follows:

	<u>United States dollars</u>
Participants' fees	200 000
Spouses' fees	150 000
Children's fees	<u>450 000</u>
Total	<u>800 000</u>

As indicated above, one third of this amount would be paid by the participants and two thirds through a donor subsidy.

22. Development and expansion of mother and child care centres

Background

84. Mother and child care activities are already being undertaken in a limited way in the occupied Palestinian territory, but efforts are concentrated on matters concerning physical health, especially during the first two years of the child's life. This approach neglects many aspects of child care, as the mother and child relationship needs to be developed in a much wider context and should encompass the social, educational, and psychological needs as well as those of health - needs which should be catered for within the family. There is a need to stress the role of the family and to recognize that the mother and child relationship forms a part, albeit an essential one, of a wider set of relationships, all of which are vital to the development of the child into a well founded adult. Thus, many activities such as family planning, day care centres, pre-school education and community oriented projects have a real bearing on the wider aspects of mother and child development, but these are at present conducted in a fragmented way.

Proposal

85. It is proposed that many of these activities could be integrated through the establishment of community centres. Each centre would not only act as a focus for the various aspects of mother and child activity, but would also be a centre for counselling and provision of specialist advice, and would provide expert day care facilities. Doctors and social workers would be provided with well equipped and well staffed facilities to enable them to make their maximum contribution to Palestinian society. It is recommended that a thorough evaluation of existing facilities be undertaken within the wider context outlined above, together with identification of areas for further development or reorientation. Based on this evaluation, a comprehensive plan for the development of community centres would be

instituted, while at the same time a number of centres actually providing some of the services envisaged would be developed and their scope widened.

#### Institutional arrangements

86. It is recommended that a co-ordinating committee should be established, composed of appropriate professionals, to oversee the implementation of this project.

#### Tentative budget

87. Assuming that 12 centres would be established, costs would be of the following order:

	<u>United States dollars</u>
Survey cost	30 000
Furniture and equipment (x 12)	300 000
Renovation and expansion (x 12)	<u>1 200 000</u>
Total	<u><u>1 530 000</u></u>
 <u>Annual operating costs</u>	
Salaries and wages	1 137 600
Maintenance	144 000
Co-ordinating committee	<u>30 000</u>
Total	<u><u>1 311 600</u></u>

### 23. Individualized instruction methods and materials for students

#### Background

88. Educationalists in the occupied Palestinian territory have for some time felt that the methods of instruction used in the Palestinian schools are becoming outdated and that more modern methods should be adopted in which accent would be placed on student learning rather than on teacher instruction. Such a change would require both reorientation of teaching methods and a completely new form of teaching material. Added urgency has been given to the need for change, however, by the intifadah. The schools and educational establishments were closed and pupils and staff denied access. As there are no teachers trained in the type of teaching proposed (nor are the appropriate teaching materials available), it is not possible for pupils to be provided with the means and methods that would allow them to pursue their education at home. Should the current situation continue for a

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prolonged period, a whole segment of the population will enter adulthood illiterate or with inadequate education.

#### Proposal

89. A project is suggested that would be a pilot scheme from which ideas would be transferred to others. Its two parts apply to the provision of materials appropriate to the methods advocated and the training of teachers both to produce and utilize such materials. It would include the establishment of a training workshop for up to 15 teachers, their training in producing and using appropriate education packages suitable for use at school or at home, the actual preparation of a number of such packages, the preparation of a manual for general use and formulation of proposals for the general introduction of the new methods. In this they would be assisted by an appropriately trained educationalist from abroad, who would have access to materials from other countries for demonstration purposes.

#### Institutional arrangements

90. It is proposed that, subject to the school governors' approval, the scheme be established at the merged Friends Schools of Bireh/Ramallah, where space and equipment for the course and the project administration are available, as well as help from the nearby universities. The project should last the length of a school year and it is suggested that UNRWA be asked to make available at least one expert in the proposed method of teaching. A Palestinian university should also be asked to allow one of its professors to work part-time with those engaged on the project and an appropriate school should be asked to allow selected staff to be released, especially the Friends School, which should be approached with a view to providing a part-time administrator and co-ordinator of the project.

#### Tentative budget

91. Costs are estimated as follows:

	<u>United States dollars</u>
Remuneration for administrative and participating staff	35 000
Other administrative costs and travel	<u>24 000</u>
Total	<u>59 000</u>

#### 24. Publications on Palestinian history and culture

##### Background

92. For many years the Arab-Israeli conflict has dominated the interest of the leaders and peoples of most countries. One of the reasons why this conflict is not always well understood is that much of the writing is done by foreigners rather than by the Palestinians themselves. Under the occupation Palestinians have been

denied many of their rights to education, knowledge and expression. A publications programme is needed to put the situation in the right perspective.

#### Proposal

93. A project is proposed to develop a comprehensive plan to reform, modernize and widen the scope of research in which Palestinian intellectuals will be able to take the lead, in the following areas: archaeology, the arts, literature, poetry, children's literature, Palestinian personalities and heroes, political history, history of cities and political relations. These topics are to be covered by books, documents, documentary films, bibliographies and an encyclopaedia. The programmes will require field work and academic research.

#### Institutional arrangements

94. In view of the complexity and importance of the proposed programme, it will be necessary to convene a preparatory conference to establish priorities, to develop the work programme and to agree on its distribution to various organizations and individuals. Participants will include representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization, various universities and institutes concerned with research on Palestinian issues, non-governmental organizations, donor agencies and individual authors, researchers and scholars. The plan includes: (a) a short-term programme to publish approximately 30 titles; (b) a medium-term programme to produce 100 titles plus one or more documentary films; and (c) a long-term programme to include a Palestinian encyclopaedia, a comprehensive bibliography and a 90-minute film (or three 30-minute films).

#### Tentative budget

95. Costs are estimated as follows:

	<u>United States dollars</u>
Short-term	97 000
Medium-term (excluding films)	500 000
Long-term	2 000 000

#### 25. Development and support of information systems

##### Background

96. The occupied Palestinian territory has been the focus of much investigation and research for many years and there exists an urgent need to provide an indigenous data base to facilitate these activities and also to provide information for planning for the future. At present, much research, especially outside the territory, has to rely on Israeli data, and even when available this is not in a form suitable for much of the research undertaken.

### Proposal

97. A project is proposed to involve the provision of specialized information and consulting services, furtherance of research and development as a local activity, improvement of the macro-level data base for planning purposes, provision of an alternative source of current Israeli data and provision of alternative channels for the distribution of information. These aims would be pursued by establishing a co-ordinating body to oversee the existing information centres, expanding those already in existence and developing others as appropriate. It would provide information and expertise at token or appropriate cost, develop a process of data updating and presentation to suit changing circumstances and produce a statistical quarterly on the occupied Palestinian territory. Qualified staff are readily available for these purposes. It is recommended that a preparatory study be undertaken and a co-ordinating committee, drawn from existing institutions and other appropriate bodies, be instituted. The preparatory study should ascertain the gaps to be filled and the areas to be strengthened. The proposed co-ordinating committee would be responsible for establishing the practices of the various centres, the form of data collection to be used, its storage and so on, and also for the production of the quarterly report. It would be responsible for obtaining and providing both the hardware and the software for use by the centre's computers in order to ensure compatibility. It is also suggested that, as far as possible, each centre be established at, or based on, existing institutions.

### Institutional arrangements

98. A co-ordinating committee should be established as soon as possible and it is recommended that this should be the agency through which the project is executed.

### Tentative budget

99. The cost of the preparatory study would be in the order of \$10,000 and the expenses of the co-ordinating committee for the first year \$12,000. Actual costs for upgrading existing centres and establishing new ones would need to await the results of the preparatory study.

## 26. Low-cost building materials

### Background

100. In the occupied Palestinian territory there is a serious shortage of low-cost building materials to meet the needs for housing (currently estimated at 78,000 units with a total area of 10 million square metres) and other buildings for services, industry and agriculture. This shortage is expected to be further aggravated in the future with the anticipated return of Palestinians, natural population growth and rising expectations for improvements in housing and living conditions. Therefore, there is an urgent need to adopt policies that will lead to a decrease in imported building materials, such as steel, wood and cement, and a corresponding increase in exploitation of low-cost local materials, such as limestone, which is suitable for building, stone, marble, cement, gypsum and lime.

Various industries can be developed from these materials in the future, while pre-cast elements of reinforced concrete could be produced immediately.

#### Proposal

101. It is proposed to establish a compound factory to produce low-cost building materials and elements. The factory will consist of the following production units: (a) production of cement blocks with special specifications for walls and roofing; (b) production of pre-cast elements of ordinary and reinforced concrete for doors, window frames and roofing; (c) production of lime and gypsum; (d) production of Y-tong blocks and (e) mass production of doors and windows according to special specifications. The project will provide opportunities to assist people in self-construction of their houses and other buildings while allowing effective and economical utilization of local building materials, reducing expensive imports and development of specialized construction methods. The development of some of the building materials, such as cement, gypsum and lime, might take several years; however, the project can start with a production unit for pre-cast elements of concrete and reinforced concrete within approximately one year. The production unit can be located in several industrial areas of the major cities in order to make use of the available infrastructure and to save on transportation costs.

#### Institutional arrangements

102. At present there is no single specialized local agency capable of implementing the project. It is proposed to entrust the execution of the project to the appropriate United Nations agency with a counterpart local organization to be established in East Jerusalem, as it offers the easiest communication and movement. Local capacities and expertise should be utilized to a maximum extent. Since the project will utilize raw materials from the mining sector, a licence will have to be obtained from the Israeli military authorities.

#### Tentative budget

103. The estimated annual budget would be as follows:

	<u>United States dollars</u>
Salaries and consultants' fees	228 000
Furniture, equipment and supplies	35 000
Rental, transportation and running costs	44 000
Contingency	<u>30 000</u>
Total	<u><u>337 000</u></u>

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REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Assistance to the Palestinian people

Report by the Secretary-General

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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 43/178 of 20 December 1988, the General Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to charge the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) with the supervision of the development of the programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people and to report to the Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in implementing the resolution. Pursuant to the resolution, the Secretary-General submitted a note on assistance to the Palestinian people (A/44/637) to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session. Annexed to the note was a report containing summaries of 26 project proposals, which had been identified by experts retained by the Centre, for inclusion in the programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people.

2. Following its consideration of the note by the Secretary-General, the General Assembly adopted resolution 44/235 of 22 December 1989 on assistance to the Palestinian people, in which it, inter alia, took note of the report annexed to the note by the Secretary-General; requested the international community, the organisations of the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations to sustain and increase their assistance to the Palestinian people, in close co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) (para. 3); reiterated its call for the implementation of development projects in the occupied Palestinian territory, including the projects mentioned in Assembly resolution 39/223 of 18 December 1984 (para. 7); called for the treatment on a transit basis of Palestinian exports and imports passing through neighbouring ports and points of exit and entry (para. 4) and also called for the granting of trade concessions and concrete preferential measures for Palestinian exports on the basis of Palestinian certificates of origin (para. 5). The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its forty-fifth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution.

3. On behalf of the Secretary-General, the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) undertook to obtain information on the implementation of the resolution from the various concerned sources. Accordingly, with regard to paragraph 3, the Executive Director wrote to the relevant agencies and organizations of the United Nations system requesting pertinent information about their assistance to the Palestinian people. With regard to operative paragraph 7, he wrote to the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) forwarding the project proposals contained in the report annexed to the note by the Secretary-General (A/44/637) for consideration by the Governing Council of UNDP with a view to their inclusion in the UNDP Programme of Assistance for the Palestinian People. The Administrator was also requested to bring to the attention of the Governing Council, for appropriate action, the projects mentioned in Assembly resolution 39/223. The Executive Director of the Centre also wrote to the Director-General of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), bringing to his attention, for appropriate action, paragraphs 4 and 5 of General Assembly resolution 44/235.

4. Given below are the summaries of the replies received by the Executive Director of the Centre in response to the above-mentioned letters.

5. Any additional information received at a later stage will be issued as an addendum to the present report.

## II. REPLIES FROM THE ORGANIZATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

### A. United Nations

#### 1. Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs

The activities of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of relevance to the provisions of General Assembly resolution 44/235 on assistance to the Palestinian people are contained in the report that was submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-fourth session (Vienna, 26 February-9 March 1990) entitled "The situation of Palestinian women in the occupied territories". 1/ In resolution 1990/11 entitled "Situation of Palestinian Women", which was adopted by the Economic and Social Council after its consideration of the above-mentioned report, the Secretary-General was requested to report to the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-fifth session on the implementation of the recommendations and conclusions contained in the above-mentioned report.

#### 2. Department of Conference Services

In accordance with paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution 44/235, a note by the Secretary General on assistance to the Palestinian people has been processed by the Department of Conference Services and issued for consideration by the Economic and Social Council at its second regular session of 1990. 2/

#### 3. Department of Technical Co-operation for Development

1. In addition to the general Department of Technical Co-operation for Development contribution to the Palestinian people through its extensive programme of technical assistance in all Department of Technical Co-operation for Development subject areas to all of the countries in the Middle East region, there are two projects that are particularly related to the health, welfare and development of the Palestinian population in the region.

2. Project RMI/88/P60, in the field of multi-sectoral statistics, provided funds for a 1990 workshop on project development in the occupied territories.

3. RMI/87/P05, entitled "Pan-Arab Project for Child Development (PAPCHILD)" is a \$2.57 million project executed by the League of Arab States in co-operation with the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development and the United Nations Statistical Office, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Governments of 14 countries in the Arab region to enable the ministries of health, social affairs and national child welfare councils develop reliable information for formulating, implementing, monitoring and evaluating maternal and child care and health and development policies and programmes.

4. The project is also designed to improve the information base for socio-economic planning in the region and will serve to upgrade present national capabilities to undertake future child health and development studies, and to process, analyse and disseminate information on various aspects of maternal and child health in response to government needs and priorities.

5. A first phase is well under way in the countries of the Sudan, Egypt, Mauritania, the Yemen Arab Republic (which now includes the formerly separate, participating Government of Democratic Yemen) and Somalia. A second phase is planned for the other eight Arab countries of Algeria, Jordan, Morocco, Djibouti, Lebanon, Tunisia, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and Syria.

#### 4. United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)

The Centre is presently in the process of preparing a report on a national housing development strategy for the Palestinian people, pursuant to resolution 12/11 of the Commission on Human Settlements, entitled "Housing conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories". In paragraph 10 of that resolution, the Executive Director was requested "to devise a national housing development strategy to the year 2000 for the Palestinian people based on the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000 in co-operation with the Palestinian State and to submit this report to the Commission at its thirteenth session".

#### 5. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

1. In accordance with the provisions of resolution 146 (VI) and 169 (VII) of the sixth and seventh sessions, respectively, of UNCTAD and the work programmes for UNCTAD for the two bienniums 1988-1989 and 1990-1991, the work of the Special Economic Unit within the UNCTAD secretariat during the period under review (July 1989-June 1990) was concentrated on four main areas of activity, namely, (a) monitoring and analysing policies and practices of Israeli occupation authorities that hamper economic development in the occupied Palestinian territory; (b) investigating the impact of such policies and practices on key economic sectors; (c) developing the data base of the Unit for the dissemination of information on the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory; and (d) contributing to the relevant activities of the organizations of the United Nations system on the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory pursuant to General Assembly resolutions. In carrying out its work in these areas, the UNCTAD secretariat maintained close consultations with the representatives of Palestine and other concerned authorities.

2. The 1990 report of the UNCTAD secretariat on recent economic developments in the occupied Palestinian territory 3/ provides an update of aggregate and sectoral developments in the Palestinian economy in the 1988-1990 period, including the impact of the Palestinian uprising and related Israeli policy measures.

3. Substantive work continued on the intersectoral study, provisionally entitled, "The West Bank and Gaza Strip: Prospects for sustained economic and social development". Following a comprehensive and in-depth examination of the state of Palestinian economy, the study will attempt an analysis of the potentials of its development at the overall and sectoral levels under varying assumptions. Based on the results of the analysis, efforts will be focused to formulate a consolidated substantive frame of reference outlining development prospects, strategy guidelines and policy options for action at various levels.

4. A number of United Nations organisations, as well as regional Arab and non-Arab organisations, were consulted with the view to co-ordinating efforts and, where possible, soliciting their association with UNCTAD in the preparation of the study. Some organisations have agreed to provide substantive inputs to the study while others (i.e. the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States, the Arab Organisation for Industrial Development and Mining, the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries Fund for International Development) have also offered financial contributions. In addition, the United Nations General Assembly, under resolution 44/174 of 19 December 1989, has made supplementary resources available for the preparation of the study. With the resource requirements of the study having been met, the UNCTAD secretariat has completed substantive arrangements for commencing with the preparation of the study. The preparation would also entail, *inter alia*, calling on external expertise as appropriate. The overall intersectoral study is expected to be completed by the end of 1991.

5. The UNCTAD secretariat collaborated with the UNCTAD/GATT International Trade Centre by formulating a project proposal for the preparation of a feasibility study for the establishment of a marketing centre in the occupied Palestinian territory, as called for in UNCTAD resolution 169 (VII). Accordingly, a team of five experts, four from the International Trade Centre and one from the UNCTAD secretariat, was commissioned to visit the occupied Palestinian territory to conduct the study. UNDP financed the mission under its Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian people. The investigation of the mission confirms the urgent need for an indigenous marketing facility in the occupied Palestinian territory to promote and market the exports of Palestinian agricultural products. It has established both the economic and financial feasibility of such a facility. The report of the team of experts, including the feasibility study, has been completed and submitted to UNDP for its consideration and subsequent action leading to the establishment of the marketing centre in the occupied Palestinian territory.

6. UNCTAD secretariat's proposal for establishing an investment projects evaluation centre in the occupied Palestinian territory has received increasing support. The proposal is aimed at initiating and developing Palestinian capabilities in resource allocation and management at both the entrepreneurial and institutional levels. The project proposal has been issued 4 for circulation restricted to Governments and international organizations with the view to soliciting contributions towards its implementation.

7. The secretariat also intensified effort on the development of a data base on the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory. As part of the preparatory work for the intersectoral study, work initiated entailed structuring the statistical

base of the Unit in line with the Economic Time Series in use at the UNCTAD secretariat.

8. In line with the requirements of work programme implementation, including consultations and field investigation, the UNCTAD secretariat fielded missions to Cairo, Amman and Tunis. With respect to access by UNCTAD staff to the occupied Palestinian territory, the Israeli authorities have shown some flexibility but still place restrictions on the designation of staff members for such access. These restrictions were applied in the case of the above-mentioned ITC/UNCTAD mission.

#### 6. United Nations Development Programme

1. Assistance to the Palestinian people was discussed by the UNDP Governing Council at its thirty-seventh session, held from 28 May to 23 June 1990, as a separate item. The Governing Council took note of the report of the Administrator on the UNDP programme of assistance to the Palestinian people summarizing activities undertaken in 1989. 5/

2. UNDP is continually increasing its assistance to the Palestinian people in consultation with the Palestine Liberation Organization. Of the three projects mentioned in General Assembly resolution 39/223, the citrus processing plant (Gaza) is now ready for UNDP implementation, following approval by Israel and agreement by Italy to provide financing for the first phase. Approval for the feasibility study for the construction of a commercial port has been obtained and arrangements are being made to undertake this feasibility study subject to availability of funds. The third project, cement factory, has not yet been approved by the Israeli authorities.

#### 7. United Nations Population Fund

UNFPA has contributed support to the following activities which are of assistance to the Palestinian people.

1. Fellowships: UNFPA has allocated a total amount of \$270,790 over five years (1986-1990) to cover fellowships for post-graduate studies. To date, two fellowships in geography at Durham University in England, one fellowship in data collection at the University of Sussex, Institute of Development Studies and one fellowship in population have been undertaken. Two fellowships for a Ph.D. in demography, one at the University of Glasgow, one at the Cairo Demographic Centre, started in 1990 and will run for three years. This project aiming at upgrading the educational level of faculty staff for teaching at the universities is executed by the Office for Project Services.

2. Maternal child health: UNFPA has received a request from the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) for the funding of two project proposals on expanded maternal health programme in the West Bank and Gaza in the respective amounts of \$968,000 and \$956,000 over three years.

These projects aim at the improvement of child and maternal health in the units operated by UNRWA in the occupied territory. These proposals are currently under appraisal at headquarters. UNFPA plans to field one officer from the Technical Division to assess the situation and provide input for the finalization of the project documents.

3. Technical assistance: UNFPA has provided support through the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia for regional advisory services and training in demographic data collection and analysis. The regional adviser undertook a mission to Syria in August and September 1989 to advise the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics on the processing of labour force data and their analytical studies. A second mission was fielded in November to assist the Bureau in evaluating the results of the Lebanon Camps Survey and to draft descriptive analysis. A seminar on the results of the Household Income and Expenditure Survey was scheduled to take place in Damascus in February 1990.

## 8. United Nations Children's Fund

### Introduction

1. UNICEF has been assisting programmes for Palestinian children and women in Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and the West Bank and Gaza since 1980. Assistance is provided in close co-operation and co-ordination with UNRWA and other relevant United Nations entities in the fields of health, primary and preschool education, activities for women and water and sanitation. Major emphasis has been placed on the reduction of infant mortality rates through improvements in primary health care and through the health education of mothers and primary school children. Special attention has been given to the protection of children against the six vaccine-preventable diseases, as well as to oral rehydration therapy, the control of acute respiratory infections, and safe delivery practices for mothers.

### Palestinians in Jordan

2. The primary focus of UNICEF co-operation during the 1980s was on activities related to infant mortality reduction and child survival. UNICEF, working in close co-operation with UNRWA, helped contribute to considerable progress in this field during the decade. In 1980, for instance, immunisation coverage levels for DPT3, OPV3 and measles were only about 30 per cent. Just 10 years later, however, coverage for DPT3 and OPV3 is at 99 per cent, while coverage for measles is at 90 per cent. Deaths arising from diarrhoeal dehydration have been reduced from more than 3,000 annually in the early 1980s to just 100 per year at present. The infant mortality rate among Palestinians has fallen from 85 to 35 per 1,000 live births. UNICEF provided vaccines, oral rehydration salts, syringes and needles, as well as cold chain equipment. UNICEF also sponsored numerous national social mobilization campaigns and helped train medical and paramedical staff. Other activities include an income-generation programme for women and the provision of basic health education for mothers.



3. In the coming years, efforts will be made to sustain the high coverage rates of immunisation and oral rehydration therapy, as well as to expand child survival activities and include the control of acute respiratory infections. An increased emphasis will be placed on promoting safe motherhood and preventing or reducing disabilities among children. New initiatives will include an early childhood development programme, involving kindergarten teachers and parents in effective early educational stimulation to young children. Another is the Action-Oriented School Health Project, in which teachers will be trained to pass on vital health information to school children.

#### Occupied territory of the West Bank and Gaza

4. The most notable of the many UNICEF activities in the occupied territory has been the joint UNICEF/UNRWA physiotherapy programme set up to provide emergency medical treatment to children suffering from limb fractures sustained during the current situation. Since its inception in the spring of 1988, the programme has reached over 3,600 children. Other UNICEF activities during the 1980s were primarily in the field of child survival. UNICEF and UNRWA efforts have helped to achieve and sustain universal childhood immunization and the use of oral rehydration salts.

5. Like the programme in Jordan, child survival activities including immunisation, oral rehydration therapy, and the control of acute respiratory infections, will be the major thrust of future UNICEF co-operation. Efforts will also be made to continue to effectively meet the critical need for physiotherapy services. New areas of co-operation will include early childhood development, women's education, and health education for school children.

#### Palestinians in Syria

6. UNICEF support for Palestinian refugees in Syria has concentrated on three principal programme fields: child survival, water supply and sanitation, and early childhood development. As in the case of Jordan and the occupied territories, UNICEF, in close collaboration with UNRWA has contributed to progress in the field of child survival. The infant mortality rate has declined from 41 per 1,000 live births in 1984 to 32 per 1,000 live births in 1989. Universal childhood immunization was attained several years ahead of the 1990 target date and has been successfully sustained. Through effective community education campaigns, the vast majority of the Palestinian mothers are now aware of the dangers of diarrhoeal dehydration and how it may be prevented with oral rehydration therapy.

7. UNICEF efforts in water and sanitation include a project to provide 7,000 people in the Qabr Essit camp, near Damascus with clean water and a sewerage network. UNICEF also provided pumps to increase water supplies for 6,000 people in eight camps. In support of early childhood development, UNICEF in close co-operation with GOPAR, the Syrian government agency responsible for Palestinians, has provided educational materials, basic equipment, furniture, and teacher training to kindergartens in the refugee camps.

8. Future co-operation will focus on sustaining past progress in child survival, with more emphasis on the control of acute respiratory infections. Early childhood development will be expanded to include both pre-school-aged children and those children not yet old enough for preschool. Women's development activities will involve literacy classes, vocational training, and community-level income-generating activities.

#### Palestinians in Lebanon

9. The UNICEF-sponsored Education for Peace programme has been an important effort in a country where after 15 years of civil war, violence and destruction have become a way of life. Camps were organised for the first time in the summer of 1989 and again in 1990, to bring together over 2,000 Palestinian children with Lebanese children from other backgrounds and areas to experience together the beauty of peaceful living, and to appreciate and learn from each others' differences. Another focus of UNICEF activities has been the rebuilding of war-damaged water and sanitation infrastructure in the Beirut-area Palestinian refugee camps. In the Saida and Tyre camps the water supply system was repaired, while in the Borj Al-Barajneh and Chatilla camps nine water tanks were installed and a potable water distribution system was set up. UNICEF, in close co-operation with UNRWA, is also continuing to provide vaccines required for Palestinian children. Finally, UNICEF has provided assistance to Palestinian mothers in support of literacy programmes and income-generating activities.

#### 9. United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

1. UNRWA provides assistance to Palestine refugees in the occupied territory of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and in Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and Jordan. A full account of the Agency's activities can be found in the Commissioner-General's report to the General Assembly. 6/ In brief, the UNRWA education programme provides nine grades of general education, vocational and technical training, pre-service and in-service teacher training, and scholarships for higher education. The programme operates with technical assistance from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). More than 135,000 children attend UNRWA schools in the occupied Palestine territory. Ninety of the Agency's 98 schools in the West Bank spent much of the first year and a half of the intifadah closed by order of the Israeli authorities. When they were finally allowed to re-open in July and August 1989, an attempt to complete the 1988-1989 academic year was hampered by curfews, strikes and individual military closure orders until 13 November when they were again ordered closed until 10 January 1990. This brought the school year to an end with the prescribed curriculum uncompleted. Following re-opening in January, the schools operated subject once more to strikes, curfews and individual closure orders but managed to complete academic year 1989-1990 on 2 July with a reduction of 33 per cent from the duration of the normal school year. The 145 schools in Gaza have remained open throughout the intifadah but have also been seriously affected by the difficult prevailing circumstance in the Gaza Strip.

2. The UNRWA health programme comprises curative and preventive care services, environmental health services in camps and a supplementary feeding service. The programme operates with technical assistance from WHO. The continuation of the intifadah and countermeasures employed by the Israel security forces have had their effect upon UNRWA health services in the occupied territory. The Agency has had to give priority to emergency and casualty care provided in the camps (described in paragraph 4, below), while at the same time maintaining its regular health activities in all areas, in spite of interruptions caused by curfews, strikes and disturbances. Noteworthy recent developments in the West Bank include the renovation and upgrading of health centres at Arrub, Kalandia and Jenin. In the Gaza Strip, noteworthy developments include the inauguration of a newly constructed health centre in Gaza Town in November 1989. In addition, the Agency is proceeding with plans to construct a 200 bed general hospital in Gaza.

3. UNRWA's relief programme provides material assistance including food, blankets, clothing and small cash grants, to those refugees who are chronically unable to provide for themselves ("special hardship cases"). The Relief and Social Services Department is also responsible for welfare case work, women's activities, adult training courses, education and training of the disabled, promotion of income-generating projects, assistance to refugees in emergency situations and the provision of facilities for pre-school activities.

4. In response to the additional needs created by the intifadah and the Israel countermeasures, UNRWA introduced a programme of emergency measures which, beginning in early 1988, have been extended through 1989 and 1990. The large number of casualties resulting from the intifadah has led to a considerable expansion of the medical programme. Five clinics in Gaza now remain open 24 hours a day and the remainder open in two shifts, while 16 clinics run double shifts in the West Bank. Additional medical supplies and equipment, including health buses for the evacuation of casualties, have been purchased and the payment of hospital costs and subsidies has been increased. In addition, medical specialists (including orthopaedic surgeons) have been provided and a physiotherapy programme is being run in conjunction with UNICEF in five clinics in Gaza and two in the West Bank.

5. Welfare services have been expanded to assist the families of those killed, disabled or detained and to cope with the far-reaching economic effects of the intifadah. Additional food is being provided to needy people in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and needy families have received cash grants. Other emergency measures taken include the expansion of the UNRWA supplementary feeding programme to thousands of additional beneficiaries. A final element of the Agency's emergency measures in the occupied territory is the programme of general assistance and protection. The major component of this programme is the placing of 13 international staff members in the West Bank and 10 in the Gaza Strip as refugee affairs officers. These staff members have facilitated Agency operations in the difficult prevailing circumstances and have assisted the refugee population in their day-to-day life. The refugee affairs officers have helped, by their presence, to lower tensions, especially during confrontations with the security forces, and to prevent maltreatment of the refugees, especially vulnerable groups, such as women and children.

6. In 1988, UNRWA launched an expanded programme of assistance comprised of projects to improve living conditions in the occupied territory. A target working figure of \$65 million was set for a period of three years, of which \$30 million had been received or pledged by July 1990. A high priority in the expanded programme of assistance is to ensure the refugees living in the 27 camps of the West Bank and Gaza Strip have decent shelter and a sanitary environment. Accordingly, substantial efforts are being made in repairing and reconstructing refugee shelters and in upgrading the quality of rehabilitation.

#### 10. World Food Programme

1. While in the past WFP has provided emergency food assistance through host Governments to the Palestinian people, in recent years the Programme has not been able to provide such assistance since no request was received either from host Governments or from PLO. According to WFP regulations, requests for emergency and/or development assistance from a liberation movement, to be implemented with the agreement of the host countries, may be considered.

2. During the meeting of the WFP governing body in June 1990 the Palestinian delegation approached the secretariat with an oral request for possible food assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied territory. WFP is giving this request due consideration and, in close co-operation with other United Nations agencies which are already assisting the Palestinian people in the occupied territory, it may be possible to provide food assistance for economic and social development.

#### B. Specialized agencies

##### 1. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

At its twenty-fifth session in November 1989, the FAO Conference adopted resolution 1/89 entitled "Provision of technical assistance to the Palestinian people", in which the Director-General was requested, *inter alia*, to send a study mission to the occupied Palestinian territory, and to organize a symposium on the Palestinian agricultural sector. In accordance with the provisions of operative paragraph 6 of that resolution, the Director-General will report to the FAO Council in November 1990, and subsequently to the FAO Conference in November 1991, on the progress achieved in the implementation of the resolution.

##### 2. General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade

With regard to the matters raised in General Assembly resolution 44/235, GATT wishes to draw attention to the following provisions of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade:

(a) Article V of GATT, concerning freedom of transit, is aimed at ensuring that goods-in-transit through the territories of contracting parties are not

subject to delays and restrictions and are exempt from customs duties and other charges, except charges commensurate with administrative expenses or with the cost of services rendered. It should be noted, however, that these obligations apply only in respect of traffic in transit to or from contracting parties. Any contracting party is, however, free to extend such benefits to countries other than contracting parties;

(b) In respect of preferential treatment of exports, GATT wishes to point out that the decision of 28 November 1979 of the Contracting Parties on Differential and More Favourable Treatment, Reciprocity and Fuller Participation of Developing Countries (the so-called Enabling Clause) foresees that developed contracting parties to GATT may accord preferential tariff treatment - and in certain circumstances preferential treatment with respect to non-tariff measures - to products originating in developing countries in accordance with the Generalized System of Preferences. The selection of developing countries that would benefit from such preferences is a matter to be decided by each preference-granting Government.

### 3. International Fund for Agricultural Development

(a) Article 2 of the Agreement establishing IFAD states that "the objectives of the fund shall be to mobilize additional resources to be made available on concessional terms for agricultural development in developing member States";

(b) Section 1 (b) article 7 of the same agreement lays down, inter alia, that IFAD is to provide financing "only to developing States that are members" of IFAD;

(c) On the eligibility of a State to become a member of IFAD, section 1 (a) of article 3 states that "membership of the Fund shall be open to any State, member of the United Nations or any of its specialized agencies, or of the International Atomic Energy Agency";

(d) IFAD therefore has not provided any financial assistance to the Palestinian people.

### 4. International Labour Organisation

The activities carried out by ILO for the benefit of the workers of the occupied territory are contained in appendix II to the report of the Director-General to the seventy-seventh session of the International Labour Conference, particularly paragraphs 117 to 124. The report was discussed at a special sitting of the Conference. In the framework of its mandate, ILO maintains continuous contact and co-operation with various Arab authorities and Palestinian representatives in order to ensure objective and realistic reporting on the situation. As mentioned in paragraph 2 of the above-mentioned report, the ILO mission to Arab States met with, inter alia, representatives of PLO. These consultations also serve the purpose of helping to define future activities to be undertaken by ILO.

**5. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation**

1. The Director-General, following the preparation of a comprehensive study of the needs of the Palestinian people within UNESCO's field of competence, was invited by the Executive Board at its 132nd session to provide for the closest possible participation of Palestine in the activities of UNESCO, in particular through its various programmes. Arrangements have subsequently been made to facilitate this co-operation: the Permanent Observer of Palestine is now entitled to make direct requests under UNESCO's Participation Programme; and an intersectoral co-ordination mechanism has been instituted within the secretariat to strengthen progressively UNESCO assistance to the Palestinian people.

2. In conformity with the Executive Board's decisions, 10 projects, representing a total cost of \$US 22,365,000, have been identified to respond to the needs of Palestinian people in the field of education and training. At its 134th session, the Executive Board invited the Director-General to pursue his action by circulating widely the study of the needs of the Palestinian people in the fields of competence of UNESCO to multilateral and bilateral funding sources and by preparing, in consultation with the Permanent Observer of Palestine, the necessary project documents to be submitted to the various funding sources.

**6. United Nations Industrial Development Organisation**

Since the third session of its General Conference, held in November 1989, UNIDO has focused on the following activities for technical assistance to the Palestinian people:

**1. Assistance for the establishment of a vegetable grading and packing house**

In response to the request of UNDP's Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian people, UNIDO has fielded a mission to the occupied territory to examine the possibility of establishment of a vegetable grading and packing house to be used mainly for exports from the Gaza Strip to countries of the European Economic Community. As a result, a technical report was prepared and submitted to UNDP in December 1989 containing advice on the feasibility of a vegetable grading and packing facility for direct exports from the Gaza Strip.

**2. Assistance to the plastics industry**

A respective project document, which was prepared by UNIDO, is still under consideration by UNDP. The objective of the assistance is to establish a plastics testing laboratory in the occupied territories.

**3. Training course in pharmaceutical and chemical industries**

Negotiations are under way with the Turin Centre of ILO to undertake a training course. It has been agreed that details of implementation have to be worked out in the near future. UNDP is expected to finance this activity.

4. A UNIDO Seminar on obstacles of and prospects for the Palestinian industrial sector, held at Vienna in October 1989, formulated recommendations for further assistance. The final report was distributed in March 1990. At the same time, discussions were held with representatives of Palestine, the Arab Industrial Development and Mining Organisation, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the UNDP office in Jerusalem on ways and mechanisms of implementation of those recommendations.

5. Close co-operation and co-ordination with other United Nations agencies and organizations have been pursued, particularly with regard to the issuance of the bulletin "West Bank and Gaza Update", which is covering the needs of these organisations' activities in support of the Palestinian people. Meanwhile, UNIDO took part in the last inter-agency meeting, held at Geneva in May 1990, which dealt with ways and means of responding to the social and economic needs of the Palestinian people. In that meeting, the free access of the United Nations agencies including, UNIDO, to the occupied territory was further discussed, and it was recommended that more efforts should be made to meet that objective. UNDP and UNRWA umbrellas were emphasized to be possible channels for delivering technical assistance to the people of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

#### Notes

1/ E/CN.6/1990/10.

2/ E/1990/71.

3/ TD/B/1266.

4/ UNCTAD/RDP/SEU/Misc.1.

5/ DP/1990/84.

6/ For the report for the period 1 July 1988 to 30 June 1989, see Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/43/13); for the report for the period 1 July 1989 to 30 June 1990, presented to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session, see ibid., Forty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/45/13).

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REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND  
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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL  
Second regular session of  
1991  
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
DECLARATION ON THE  
GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE  
TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND  
PEOPLES BY THE  
SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND  
THE INTERNATIONAL  
INSTITUTIONS ASSOCIATED  
WITH THE UNITED NATIONS

Assistance to the Palestinian People

Report of the Secretary-General

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## INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 43/178 of 20 December 1988, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to charge the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) with the supervision of the development of the programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people and to report to the Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in implementing the resolution. Pursuant to this resolution, the Secretary-General submitted a report on assistance to the Palestinian people (A/45/503) to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session.

2. Following its consideration of the Secretary-General's report, the General Assembly adopted resolution 45/183 of 21 December 1990, on assistance to the Palestinian people, in which it, *inter alia*, took note of the report of the Secretary-General on assistance to the Palestinian people; requested the World Food Programme to provide food assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory; requested the international community, the organizations of the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to sustain and increase their assistance to the Palestinian people, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO); called for treatment on a transit basis of Palestinian exports and imports passing through neighbouring ports and points of exit and entry; also called for the granting of trade concessions and concrete preferential measures for Palestinian exports on the basis of Palestinian certificates of origin; reiterated its call for the implementation of development projects in the occupied Palestinian territory, including the projects mentioned in General Assembly resolution 39/223 of 18 December 1984; and requested the Secretary-General to report in full to the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution.

3. On behalf of the Secretary-General, the Executive Director of UNCHS (Habitat) wrote to the various concerned sources requesting information on the implementation of the above-mentioned resolution. Given below are the summaries of the replies received.

4. Any additional information received will be issued as an addendum to the present report.

## II. REPLIES FROM THE ORGANIZATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

### A. United Nations

#### 1. United Nations Children's Fund

##### Introduction

5. UNICEF has been supporting programmes for Palestinian children and women in Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and the West Bank and Gaza since 1980. Assistance in the fields of health, pre-school and primary education, women's programmes, water supply and sanitation is provided in close cooperation with UNRWA and other relevant United Nations agencies. Emphasis has been placed on the reduction of infant mortality rates through improvements in primary health care and the promotion of health education for mothers and primary school children. Special attention has been given to the protection of children against the six vaccine-preventable diseases, control of diarrhoeal diseases, control of acute respiratory infections and promotion of safe delivery practices for mothers. Since the beginning of the Gulf crisis in August 1990, strenuous efforts have been made to sustain the above-mentioned programme. New programmes have also been planned to address the impact of the crisis.

##### Palestinians in Jordan

6. During the 1980s, UNICEF working in close cooperation with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), helped to achieve a considerable reduction in infant mortality rates. The infant mortality rate among Palestinians has fallen from 59 to 35 per 1,000 live births during the period 1980 to 1990. The main contributory factor to this reduction is UNICEF's promotion of child immunization, control of diarrhoeal diseases and control of acute respiratory infections. Immunization coverage levels for DPT3 and OPV3 were increased from 30 per cent in 1980 to 99 per cent in 1990. Coverage for measles was also increased to 90 per cent. Deaths arising from diarrhoeal diseases have been reduced from more than 3,000 per annum in the early 1980s to just 100 per year at present. UNICEF provided vaccines, syringes, cold chain equipment and oral rehydration salts. Other programmes supported by UNICEF include an income-generating programme for women and the provision of basic health education for mothers.

7. A new programme of cooperation for the period 1990-1994, approved by the 1990 UNICEF Executive Board, aims to sustain the gains made in the field of immunization, control of diarrhoeal disease and control of acute respiratory infections. It places increased emphasis on promoting safe motherhood so as to prevent and reduce disabilities among children. Two new programmes were also initiated. The first is an early childhood development programme which involves kindergarten teachers and parents in effective early educational stimulation of young children. The second programme is an action-oriented school health project in which teachers are trained to pass on vital health information to school children.

8. Under the regular programme, UNICEF continues to provide through UNRWA supplies and equipment for the immunization programme and ORS for control of diarrhoeal diseases. UNICEF supported the training of 100 UNRWA medical and paramedical staff with special emphasis on primary health care services, safe motherhood and early detection of disability. The comprehensive health education programme has reached over 85 per cent of women. Nutrition education classes to equip mothers with knowledge for better feeding of their children and families have been organized. A survey was conducted to find out the major causes of child morbidity and a medium-term campaign on prevention of disability was launched in November 1990.

9. Following the Gulf crisis, some 400,000 Palestinians have returned to Jordan. UNICEF supported a study on the impact of the crisis on women and children in Jordan. The study shows that: the percentage of families living below the poverty line has increased to 30 per cent of all families (i.e. 1 million Jordan/Palestinians); 5 per cent of the population (i.e. 150,000 people) are absolute poor; unemployment has surged beyond 30 per cent; anaemia and malnutrition among women and children are on the rise; over 40,000 students have returned from the Gulf and as a result the educational facilities and the health services are overstretched. Thus, the gains that Jordan had made in social services are now threatened. UNICEF has prepared a plan of action to minimize the adverse impact of the crisis on both Jordanian and Palestinian children. The plan includes support for nutrition, health, basic education, income generation and information retrieval programmes in the amount of \$US 6.2 million.

#### Palestinians in the Syrian Arab Republic

10. As in the case of Jordan, UNICEF, in close collaboration with UNRWA, has contributed to progress in child survival. During the period 1984 to 1989, the infant mortality rate declined from 41 to 32 per 1,000 live births. Universal child immunization was attained several years ahead of the 1990 target date and has been successfully sustained. The majority of mothers have been made aware through an effective community education campaign on how to prevent dehydration during diarrhoeal diseases.

11. UNICEF supported a water supply and sanitation programme to provide clean water and a sewage network for 7,000 people. Pumps were also provided to increase water supply for an additional 6,000 people in 8 camps. UNICEF, in collaboration with GOPAR, the Syrian government agency responsible for Palestinians, has provided educational materials, basic equipment, furniture, and kindergarten teacher training in refugee camps.

12. In 1991, the Executive Board will have before it a new programme of assistance in the amount of \$1.6 billion for the period 1991-1994, which includes assistance to: (a) health (immunization, control of diarrhoeal diseases and control of acute respiratory infections); (b) a women's development programme (which aims to reduce female illiteracy from 25 to 15 per cent, increase women's share in the labour force from 11 to 25 per cent and reduce neo-natal and maternal mortality and morbidity by 25 per cent by

1994); (c) early childhood development (which aims to upgrade the quality and increase access to early childhood stimulation.

13. In addition, UNICEF plans to address the problems arising from the Gulf crisis following the result of impact studies which are under way in the region.

#### West Bank and Gaza

14. UNICEF-supported activities during the 1980s were primarily in the field of child survival. In cooperation with UNRWA, UNICEF has helped to achieve and sustain universal child immunization and to promote the use of ORS. In recent years, UNICEF assistance has focused on the joint UNICEF/UNRWA physiotherapy programme which was set up to provide emergency assistance to children suffering from limb fractures sustained during the current situation.

15. A programme designed to minimize the impact of the Gulf crisis has recently been prepared. It provides for health assistance, including support for growth monitoring and well-baby clinics, child and maternal anaemia, control of diarrhoeal disease, control of acute respiratory infections and supplies of essential drugs. Funds for short-term credit for agricultural and industrial activities are also provided. The programme is now under review.

#### Palestinians in Lebanon

16. The UNICEF-sponsored Education for Peace Programme has played an important role in a country where, after 15 years of civil war, violence and destruction have become a way of life. In the summer of 1989 and again in 1990, camps were organized to bring together over 2,000 Palestinian children with Lebanese children from other backgrounds so that they may experience together the beauty of peaceful living and appreciate and learn from each other's experience.

17. Another focus of UNICEF support has been the rebuilding of the war-damaged water and sanitation infrastructure in Palestinian refugee camps in the Beirut area. In the Saïda and Tyre camps the water supply system was repaired. In the Borj Al-Barajneh and Chatilla camps nine water tanks were installed and a potable water distribution system was set up. UNICEF, in close cooperation with UNRWA, also continues to provide vaccines required for Palestinian children. Literacy and income-generating activities have also received UNICEF support.

18. A plan of action to support women's development, early childhood stimulation and water supply and sanitation programmes has recently been prepared by the field office and is under consideration.

## 2. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

19. Pursuant to Conference resolutions 146 (VI) and 169 (VII) and the work programme of the UNCTAD secretariat for the biennium 1990-1991, the Special Economic Unit within the UNCTAD secretariat concentrated its work, during the period under review (July 1990-June 1991), on four main areas, namely: (a) monitoring and analysing policies and practices of Israeli occupation authorities that hamper economic development in the occupied Palestinian territory; (b) investigating the impact of such policies and practices on key economic sectors; (c) developing the database of the Unit, including the dissemination of relevant qualitative and quantitative information on the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory; and (d) coordinating with and contributing to the relevant activities of the organizations of the United Nations system, pursuant to relevant General Assembly resolutions regarding assistance to the Palestinian people and economic and social conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory. In carrying out these activities, close consultations were maintained with Palestinian and other concerned authorities.

20. The forthcoming report of the UNCTAD secretariat to the Trade and Development Board at its thirty-eighth session monitors main developments in the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory during the period under review. It provides updated information on the impact of the Palestinian uprising and related Israeli measures on the aggregate and sectoral performance of the Palestinian economy. Special attention is given to the impact of the recent crisis on the Palestinian economy, with particular reference to the plight of Palestinian migrant workers, as well as the effects of the declining levels of remittances and transfers to the occupied Palestinian territory and continuing deficiencies in the domestic production base. The report also identifies feasible measures aimed at redressing the deteriorating economic situation.

21. The UNCTAD secretariat intensified work on the preparation of the intersectoral study entitled "The West Bank and Gaza Strip: prospects for sustained economic and social development". Within the overall frame of this study, 27 main sectors, subsectors and issues were identified for in-depth investigation. Detailed outlines were developed and 25 specific studies have been commissioned covering various economic and social sectors/issues. These include agriculture, industry, energy, housing, water resources, population and labour, transport, services, finance, education, health, public administration, social welfare services and others.

22. The outlines of these studies are structured in such a manner as to correspond to the three parts of the general outline established for the overall intersectoral study itself, namely, an analysis and assessment of economic and social developments over the past 24 years of occupation, an investigation of prospects for the future, and the formulation of a frame of reference for feasible strategies, policy options and measures for action. To the extent possible, these outlines of specific studies have been brought to the attention of the relevant organizations of the United Nations system with a view to coordinating efforts and soliciting their observations and possible

contributions. In view of the positive and encouraging responses received from the organizations contacted, the UNCTAD secretariat will endeavour to benefit from their expertise and promote further cooperation towards the completion of the intersectoral study, thus providing an integrated framework for planning the magnitude and direction of international assistance to the Palestinian people.

23. While embarking on the preparation of the in-depth specific studies, the UNCTAD secretariat has also initiated work on a conceptual/analytical framework which will provide technical guidelines for investigating, under different scenarios, future prospects in each economic and social field where a specific study is being prepared. The findings of the specific studies will be subsequently integrated into a substantive frame of reference outlining development prospects, strategies and policy options for action at various levels. Owing to the difficulties encountered as a result of the crisis in the region, the intersectoral study is now expected to be completed by the first semester of 1992. For further information on this activity, reference is made to the Secretary-General's report to the second regular session of the Economic and Social Council on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 44/174 entitled "Living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory".

24. Work has been completed on the in-depth study of "Tourism and related activities in the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory". The study is now being finalized for publication. The study examines the performance of this sector prior to and since the Israeli occupation, including an analysis of the importance of tourism for the Palestinian economy. Emphasis has been focused on the factors that have constrained the performance of this sector up to 1987 and subsequently during the Palestinian uprising. Special attention is given to an assessment of its immediate outlook and needs for revival, including measures for immediate action. The prospects for the sustained growth and long-term development of the sector will be investigated separately within the frame of the over 11 intersectoral study. To the extent possible and where relevant, attempts have been made to coordinate these efforts with those of the World Tourism Organization (WTO), including consultations on substantive issues with the relevant staff of WTO.

25. During the period under review, the work of the secretariat on its database on the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory culminated in the publication of the "Database extracts on economic issues and related Israeli practices in the occupied Palestinian territory (West Bank and Gaza Strip), January-December 1989" (UNCTAD/RDP/SEU/4). This is the fourth in the series of monitoring reports on economic and social issues and related Israeli policies and practices in the occupied Palestinian territory. Along with the previous issues, the document is intended to: (a) constitute a cumulative chronology of major developments and related issues which dominate economic activities in the occupied Palestinian territory; (b) serve as a useful cumulative source of reference for further investigation of the issues concerned; and (c) supplement both quantitative and qualitative information and analysis contained in the reports and studies undertaken by the UNCTAD secretariat on the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory.

26. Work was intensified on the structuring of the statistical series in the UNCTAD secretariat's database on the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory in line with the Economic Time Series in use at the UNCTAD secretariat. This entailed the identification of data sources, followed by the classification, entry, verification and tabulation of available series for the period 1968-1987, covering national income accounts, balance of payments, external merchandise trade, population and labour force. Apart from serving as a consolidated source of quantitative information on the Palestinian economy for over 20 years of the occupation period, the new statistical series also provides the basis for the UNCTAD secretariat's present task of assessing future growth trends and establishing targets under different scenarios, in connection with the preparation of the overall intersectoral study, mentioned above.

27. In line with work programme requirements and coupled with the provisions of resolutions adopted by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly during the period under review, the UNCTAD secretariat has intensified efforts to strengthen coordination and cooperation with an increasing number of the United Nations organizations, international non-governmental organizations and others involved in work on and/or concerned with the economic and social situation of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory. This included the dispatch of missions to Amman, Cairo and Tunis. Regarding access to the occupied Palestinian territory by the staff of the UNCTAD secretariat, the Israeli occupation authorities have not yet responded to the latest request of UNCTAD on the matter.

### 3. United Nations Development Programme

28. In response to General Assembly resolution 45/183, as well as other relevant resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the UNDP Governing Council, the UNDP Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People has been expanded considerably. In 1990, estimated delivery figures for development assistance in the occupied Palestinian territories increased to approximately \$US 11 million, as compared to a rate of delivery of \$3.8 million in 1989.

29. In preparing for future assistance to the Palestinian people during the period 1992-1996, the UNDP Governing Council, at its special session in February 1991, increased by 25 per cent the level of resources available to the Programme of Assistance (from \$12-\$15 million). As a result, the level of central resources for the Palestinian people is greater than funds earmarked by UNDP for over 90 other countries and territories.

30. With supplemental funding provided by other donor Governments and organizations, now including the Arab Gulf Fund for United Nations Development Organizations, Canada, Greece, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Tunisia, and the United States of America, UNDP Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People has been active for over a decade. Since its inception in 1980, the UNDP



Governing Council has allocated \$40.5 million to this activity, including the 1992-1996 allocation, and over \$22 million has been provided in supplemental funding.

31. Current and future activities of PAPP will focus on opportunities for Palestinian entrepreneurship and employment, environmental concerns and human development. In 1990 the Administrator of UNDP announced the designation of a Special Representative to have overall responsibility for UNDP activities in the occupied Palestinian territories. He will take up these responsibilities in early 1991.

#### 4. United Nations Environment Programme

32. UNEP, in cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean, located in Alexandria, Egypt, has a project entitled "Training course on water supply, sanitation and health for environmental health officers working with the Palestinian people". The long-term objective of the project is to improve the quality of the drinking water supply, sanitation and food hygiene so as to contribute to the control of diarrhoeal and other water-borne diseases in Palestinian refugee camps. The short-term objective is to facilitate training in pollution control and sound management of environment-related diseases in the Palestinian refugee camps and settlements. The project was initiated in February 1989 and is expected to run through June 1991. UNEP's contribution is approximately \$US 30,000 in cash while WHO contributes \$15,000, in kind.

33. Two training courses have so far been held in Amman, Jordan, from 5 to 16 November 1989 and 10 to 21 February 1990. As a result, 36 environmental officers have been trained out of about 122 in the four fields of UNRWA. A manual, in Arabic and English, on water supply and sanitation has also been prepared and field tested; 300 copies in each of the two languages will be published shortly. Evaluation of the impact of the project on camp conditions and the performance of trained environmental health officers is being carried out and a report will be available by June 1991. Future activities and follow-up will depend on the evaluation mission's recommendations.

#### 5. United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

##### Introduction

34. In 1991, UNRWA is continuing to provide education, health, relief and social services and other humanitarian assistance to eligible Palestine refugees in its five fields of operation, namely, Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the occupied territory of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In addition, emergency measures are being carried on in Lebanon and the West Bank and Gaza Strip. A full account of UNRWA's activities can be found in the Commissioner-General's report to the General Assembly. 1/ The following is a

brief summary of the Agency's present activities in the occupied territory. An indication of the level of UNRWA's assistance to the Palestinian inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza is provided by the budget figures. In 1988, the first full year of the intifadah, UNRWA's combined regular and emergency budget for the occupied territory was \$US 112 million. The equivalent figure for the present year is \$135 million. In addition to the regular and emergency budgets, about \$30 million has been pledged or received since 1988 on the expanded programme of assistance referred to in paragraph 42 below, bringing UNRWA's resources for the occupied territory over the period 1988-1991 to some \$518 million.

### Education

35. The objective of the Agency's education programme is to provide, within the framework of the host countries' prescribed school curricula, general education at the elementary and preparatory levels, as well as teacher and higher education and vocational and technical education for Palestine refugees in accordance with their educational needs, identity and cultural heritage. The programme operates with technical assistance from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). In the 1990-1991 school year, the Agency has more than 135,000 pupils enrolled in 247 schools in the occupied territory and is providing training for more than 1,700 vocational and teacher trainees in its four training centres. The three training centres in the West Bank, which were under extended closure by military order from December 1987, were authorized to reopen in spring 1990. At the outset of the Gulf war, however, the West Bank Training Centres and the Gaza Training Centre were closed by military order and were allowed to reopen only in the second half of March 1991. Schools in the occupied territory are now open but throughout the period of the intifadah have been severely disrupted by strikes, curfews, disturbances and closure orders imposed by the Israeli authorities.

### Health

36. The UNRWA health programme comprises curative and preventive care services, environmental health services in camps and distribution of food supplements to vulnerable groups. The programme operates with technical assistance from WHO. The continuation of the intifadah and the counter-measures employed by the Israeli security forces have affected UNRWA health services in the occupied territory. The Agency has had to give priority to emergency and casualty care provided in the camps (described in para. 40 below), while at the same time maintaining its regular health activities in all areas, in spite of interruption caused by curfews, strikes, disturbances and the declaration of certain areas as closed military zones.

37. Besides continuing these services, UNRWA's health programme is focusing on the implementation of a number of new strategies in 1991, including prophylaxis and treatment of nutritional anaemia (which is highly prevalent among women of child-bearing age and children), management of growth retardation in children, control of diabetes mellitus, improved

maternal health, development of human resources for health, provision of equipment to and improvement of blood-transfusion facilities in the non-governmental organization hospitals in the occupied territory and the initiation of a project for building, equipping and commissioning a 200-bed hospital in Gaza at a cost of \$US 35 million, \$20 million of which represents capital cost and \$15 million operating costs for the first three years.

#### Relief and social services

38. The relief and social services programme provides support to the neediest among the Palestine refugees - "special hardship cases" - and facilitates self-reliance. The programme consists of assistance to special hardship cases, social case work, income-generation and related skill training, women's programmes, rehabilitation of the disabled and assistance to refugees in emergency situations.

39. These activities are continuing in 1991. In view of the deterioration of the socio-economic situation in UNRWA's area of operations, the number of special hardship cases will be increased Agency-wide by 7 per cent. Emphasis is being placed on setting up small group enterprises to provide employment, especially for women from special hardship families and the disabled. The community-based rehabilitation programme for the disabled is continuing and a review of its development to date will be the basis of a joint UNRWA-NGO discussion of future strategy in 1991. In the occupied territory, projects will be developed, aiming at the vocational rehabilitation of disabled, in particular former breadwinners injured during the intifadah.

#### Extraordinary measures

40. In response to the additional needs created by the intifadah and the Israeli responses, UNRWA introduced a programme of extraordinary measures which, beginning in early 1988, have been extended through 1989, 1990 and 1991. The large number of casualties resulting from the intifadah has led to a considerable expansion of the emergency medical programme. Five clinics in Gaza now remain open 24 hours a day and the remainder open in two shifts, while 16 clinics run double shifts in the West Bank. Additional medical supplies and equipment, including health buses for the evacuation of casualties, have been purchased and the payment of hospital costs and subsidies has been increased. In addition, medical specialists (including orthopaedic surgeons) have been provided and a physiotherapy programme is being run in conjunction with UNICEF and Médecins sans Frontières in six clinics in Gaza and five in the West Bank.

41. Welfare services have been expanded to assist the families of those killed, disabled or detained and to cope with the far-reaching socio-economic effects of the intifadah. Additional food is being provided to needy people in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and needy families have received cash grants. Distribution of food was particularly important during the prolonged curfews imposed by the Israeli authorities during the Gulf war. Foodstuffs

have been distributed to 295,000 families. Other emergency measures taken include the provision of food supplements to 38,000 additional beneficiaries. Finally, the Agency's extraordinary measures in the occupied territory include a programme of general assistance and protection. The major component of this programme is the placing of 12 international staff members in the West Bank and 9 in the Gaza Strip as refugee affairs officers. These staff members have facilitated Agency operations in the difficult prevailing circumstances and have assisted the refugee population in their day-to-day life. The refugee affairs officers have helped, by their presence, to lower tensions, especially during confrontations with the security forces, and to prevent maltreatment of the refugees, especially vulnerable groups such as women and children.

#### Expanded programme of assistance

42. In 1988, UNRWA launched an expanded programme of assistance comprised of projects to improve living conditions in the occupied territory. A target working figure of \$US 65 million was set for a period of three years, of which approximately \$30 million has been received or pledged by March 1991. A high priority in the expanded programme of assistance is to ensure that refugees living in the 27 camps of the West Bank and Gaza Strip have decent shelter and a sanitary environment. Accordingly, substantial efforts are being made to repair and rebuild refugee shelters and to upgrade the quality of rehabilitation. The Agency will also continue to improve camp infrastructure, primary health care facilities including the building and equipping of additional health centres, interhal sewage systems and integration of camp water and sewage schemes within municipal and regional systems.

### 6. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

#### Israeli land and water policies and practices

43. ESCWA is currently updating its information on the issues covered in the study prepared on Israeli land and water policies and practices in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories as requested by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1990/53.

#### Agriculture and development in Western Asia

44. ESCWA's recurrent publication entitled Agriculture and Development in Western Asia, No. 14 for 1991, will include papers on the impact of Israeli water policies on agriculture and the impact of Jewish immigration on agriculture and the rural population in the occupied Palestinian territories.

#### Other studies

45. A study on prospects for rural development in the occupied territories was finalized in December and will shortly be distributed. In addition, a feasibility study will be conducted in 1991 on establishing a centre for

production and training related to livestock. Lastly, ESCWA expects to complete within two months a study on the impact of the Gulf crisis on the occupied Palestinian territories.

## 7. United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)

46. Pursuant to resolution 12/11 of the Commission on Human Settlements, entitled "Housing conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories", UNCHS (Habitat) has prepared a report on a national housing development strategy for the Palestinian people. Paragraph 10 of that resolution requested the Executive Director "to devise a national housing development strategy to the year 2000 for the Palestinian people based on the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000, in cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization, including the housing requirements of a future independent Palestinian State and to submit this report to the Commission at its thirteenth session". The report, which is entitled "Housing requirements of the Palestinian people: report of the Executive Director" (HS/C/13/2/Add.1) will be submitted to the Commission on Human Settlements at its thirteenth session (Harare, 29 April to 8 May 1991).

## 8. World Food Programme

47. The Executive Director has approved the implementation of project PAL 4468/Q entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied territories" which targets the most needy Palestinians in the occupied territories, who have particularly no means of earning a living because of the prevailing conditions and therefore are unable to satisfy their basic food needs. The hospitals and similar institutions serving the disabled, aged people and orphans have been among the first to suffer from budgetary stringencies and unless food can be obtained from external sources, patients cannot be fed. This quick-action project will contribute to overcome this grave situation as a first step to a possibly larger programme of assistance.

## B. Specialized agencies

### 1. International Labour Organisation

48. ILO is pursuing its efforts with a view to implementing and developing its technical assistance programme in the occupied Arab territories. Its current projects concern vocational training, trade union training and rehabilitation of handicapped persons.

49. Furthermore, the Director-General of ILO is making the necessary arrangements for the preparation of his annual report on the situation of the Arab workers of the occupied Arab territories to be submitted to the forthcoming International Labour Conference in June 1991. The

Director-General is sending two missions to the region, one to the Arab countries and the other to Israel and the occupied Arab territories in order to collect the latest available information on the subject.

## 2. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

50. At its twenty-fifth session in November 1989, the FAO Conference adopted resolution 1/89 entitled "Provision of technical assistance to the Palestinian people", requesting the Director-General, inter alia, to send a study mission to the occupied Palestinian territory, and to organize a symposium on the Palestinian agricultural sector.

51. In response to this resolution, the Director-General submitted a report to the FAO Council at its ninety-eighth session in November 1990. The Council expressed the following views:

"The Council noted with satisfaction that progress had been achieved in the implementation of Conference resolution 1/89 entitled 'Provision of Technical Assistance to the Palestinian People' and expressed its appreciation to the Director-General for the steps which he had taken, in particular with respect to sending a mission to study and evaluate the situation of the agricultural sector in the occupied territory. It confirmed that the mission should proceed on the basis of the action taken by the Director-General. The Council requested that the symposium envisaged in Conference resolution 1/89 be organized soon. It was hoped that the results of the mission would be included in the agenda of the symposium but the convening of the symposium should not be linked to the sending of the mission. The symposium could take place in Rome."

52. The Director-General will report to the FAO Conference at its twenty-sixth session in November 1991 on the implementation of the two activities envisaged by the resolution.

## 3. International Fund for Agricultural Development

53. The Fund's rules and procedures do not provide for extending the assistance called for in General Assembly resolution 45/183. Article 2 of the Agreement establishing IFAD states that "the objectives of the Fund shall be to mobilize additional resources to be made available on concessional terms for development in developing member States".

## 4. United Nations Industrial Development Organization

54. Since the third session of its General Conference (November 1989), UNIDO has focused on the following activities for technical assistance to the Palestinian people:

Assistance for the establishment of a vegetable grading and packing house

55. In response to the request of UNDP's Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People, UNIDO sent a mission to the occupied territories to examine the possibility of establishing a vegetable grading and packing house to be used mainly for exports from the Gaza Strip to countries of the European Economic Community (EEC). As a result, a technical report was prepared and submitted to UNDP in December 1989. It contains advice on the feasibility of a vegetable grading and packing facility for direct exports from the Gaza Strip.

Assistance to the plastics industry

56. A project document, which was prepared by UNIDO, is still under consideration by UNDP. The objective of the assistance is to establish a plastics testing laboratory in the occupied territories.

Training course in pharmaceutical and chemical industries

57. Negotiations are under way with the Turin Centre of ILO to undertake this training course. It has been agreed recently that details of implementation have to be worked out in the near future. UNDP is expected to finance this activity.

58. The final report on the UNIDO seminar on obstacles to and prospects for the Palestinian industrial sector, held in Vienna in October 1989, which contained the seminar's recommendations for further assistance, was distributed in March 1990. At the same time, discussions were held with representatives of Palestine, the Arab Industrial Development and Mining Organization (AIDMO), ESCWA and the UNDP office in Jerusalem on ways and means of implementing those recommendations. It was agreed in principle that these organizations may meet this year to discuss the matter.

59. Close cooperation and coordination with other United Nations agencies and organizations have been pursued, particularly with regard to the issuance of the bulletin "West Bank and Gaza Update", which is covering the needs of these organizations in support of the Palestinian people. Meanwhile, UNIDO took part in the last inter-agency meeting, held at Geneva in May 1990, which dealt with ways and means of responding to the social and economic needs of the Palestinian people.

60. UNIDO's Industrial Development Board (IDB) held its seventh session from 5 to 9 November 1990. A report on UNIDO's technical assistance to the Palestinian people was submitted by the secretariat and was discussed at the session. As a result, a decision was adopted requesting UNIDO to sustain and increase its assistance to the Palestinian people and to undertake a number of activities, including cooperation with relevant United Nations bodies, in the efforts aimed at the establishment of a marketing centre for Palestinian industrial products.

5. General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade

61. With regard to the matters raised in General Assembly resolution 45/183, GATT wishes to draw attention to the following provisions of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

(a) Article V of GATT, concerning freedom of transit, is aimed at ensuring that goods in transit through the territories of contracting parties are not subject to delays and restrictions and are exempt from customs duties and other charges, except charges commensurate with administrative expenses or with the cost of services rendered. It should be noted, however, that these obligations apply only in respect of traffic in transit to or from contracting parties. Any contracting party is, however, free to extend such benefits to countries other than contracting parties.

(b) In respect of preferential treatment of exports, GATT wishes to point out that the decision of 28 November 1979 of the Contracting Parties on Differential and More Favourable Treatment, Reciprocity and Fuller Participation of Developing Countries (the so-called Enabling Clause) provides that developed contracting parties to GATT may accord preferential tariff treatment - and in certain circumstances preferential treatment with respect to non-tariff measures - to products originating in developing countries in accordance with the Generalized System of Preferences. The selection of developing countries that would benefit from such preferences is a matter to be decided by each preference-granting Government.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/45/13).

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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION  
ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE  
TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES  
BY THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND  
THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS  
ASSOCIATED WITH THE UNITED NATIONS

Assistance to the Palestinian people

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

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II. REPLIES FROM THE ORGANIZATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

B. Specialized agencies

World Health Organization

Special technical support

1. For many years the World Health Organization (WHO) has provided support and assistance for the population of the occupied Arab territories in order to improve their health conditions. In 1989, its member States considered it essential to intensify this assistance and requested the Director General to take all necessary steps in order to implement the World Health Assembly resolutions related to the health conditions of the population in the occupied Arab territories. A technical support programme for improving health conditions was prepared in October 1989, and in February 1990 a Medical Officer was put in charge of its implementation.

2. On the basis of the programme elaborated in October 1989, about 45 project proposals have been received from Palestinian humanitarian, charitable and medical organizations and from public and charitable hospitals, requesting WHO collaboration in:

(a) Improving primary health care by reorganizing the primary health care network, creating or strengthening units of rehabilitation and physiotherapy, procuring medical equipment for primary health care centres and providing transport facilities for mobile clinics;

(b) Providing medical equipment to the charitable hospitals, creating new hospital units and reorganizing the transport system;

(c) Creating and developing mental health centres;

(d) Providing fellowships and organizing training for doctors and nurses, locally and abroad.

3. The response of WHO was to make a very detailed and thorough technical evaluation of the proposals submitted and to work out with the cooperating institution project profiles for the identification of donors.

4. In July 1990, 34 project proposals costing an estimated \$US 11,269,000 were included in an appeal to donors from the Director General. The appeal resulted in financial contributions from several countries, totalling \$US 4,500,000, channelled either through WHO or directly to the institutions concerned. Ten projects were implemented by WHO, totalling \$US 2,100,000; several others, totalling \$US 2,400,000 have been implemented or are currently being implemented by the United Nations bodies present in the occupied Arab territories (the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)) and by non-governmental organizations in collaboration with Palestinian institutions. An account of the status of progress and implementation of the projects included in the appeal by the Director General is available. Many of them have yet to be funded.

5. To respond to the new health needs arising from the Gulf crisis, a new appeal was made by the Director General in September 1990 for aid to the charitable hospitals in the occupied Arab territories. Several donors responded positively. The assistance pledged or received as a result of this appeal is about \$US 1,500,000, most of it for the partial covering of operating expenses, medical and surgical equipment and assistance to the charitable hospitals on the West Bank and Gaza. In addition, the Commission of the European Communities has pledged \$US 6,000,000 to be channelled through the Netherlands Red Cross Society and is to be implemented in cooperation with charitable institutions in response to the Director General's appeal.

6. Whatever the method of financing of the health facilities in the occupied Arab territories, the WHO medical officer in Jerusalem continues to coordinate the implementation of the special technical programme, working as a technical adviser in the health field with all the parties concerned.

#### WHO collaborating centres in the occupied territories

7. Initially set up to strengthen the local capability for operational research on primary health care, the centres have seen their functions change substantially over the years, depending on the extent of their integration with the existing health services, the availability of human and financial resources and other intrinsic factors such as the cohesiveness of the technical committees guiding them or extrinsic factors such as the security of the environment in which they operate.

8. Since 1988, when WHO evaluated the operation of the centres, each has developed in its own way and has had to face slightly different difficulties. Their present situation is summarized below.

#### WHO Collaborating Centre for Primary Health Care Research, Gaza

9. Initially set up within the pre-existing health structures in 1985, this centre has maintained and even strengthened its institutional and technical links with the health services in Gaza. A number of its staff have responsibilities both within the Gaza health system and within the WHO centre. There are two staff members concerned with technical and administrative matters. The Director is the Chairman of the Management Board, which meets once a month to evaluate research proposals and the preliminary results of surveys.

10. The scientific quality of this centre's work is good. The projects are selected according to their relevance to everyday health problems, and have a real impact on the development of the health strategies and standards applied in the Gaza Strip.

11. The attitude of the community and its leaders to the centre seems to be positive. The centre has established working relations with non-governmental organizations and with the UNRWA health centres. It has scientific and technical relations with outside academic institutions.

12. Finally, the centre produces a monthly epidemiological bulletin that is noteworthy for the quality of its presentation and for its content.

WHO Collaborating Centre for Research on Primary Health Care in Ramallah

13. This centre was set up in 1985. It had readier access to the international scientific community at a time when travel within and outside the territory was relatively easy. All this has changed since the start of the intifadah. The operational and logistic difficulties have been accentuated by irregular administrative and financial support. The rental for the premises accommodating the two Ramallah centres and some project costs totalling \$US 623,000 for the period May 1985 until June 1991 were paid by WHO; the WHO funds are channelled through UNDP, which has an administrative unit in Jerusalem.

WHO Collaborating Centre for Research on Development of Human Resources in Ramallah

14. This centre was set up with the intention of revitalizing training and of setting up mechanisms for the projection of staff needs and for coordinating and training staff in the territories or abroad.

15. Up to now the centre has had only very limited activities and its constraints are largely the same as those described for the Collaborating Centre for Research on Primary Health Care. Specific constraints are the lack of specialist staff, irregular financial support and a general working climate unfavourable to medium-term or long-term planning. Nevertheless, the centre has managed during the past year to arrange the training abroad of six specialists in diabetes (financed by WHO) and to organize a course on information technology.

Conclusion

16. This report gives rise to certain reflections on measures essential to ensure improvements in the health conditions of the Arab population in the occupied Arab territories. It shows the efforts of WHO in this domain to respond to World Health Assembly resolutions. These efforts have been reinforced during the past year.

17. The appeals of the Director General have resulted in support from the donor community. This support will undoubtedly continue in the future.

18. After one year of operation in the occupied Arab territories, the WHO programme is entering a new phase in the strengthening of primary health care institutions; WHO will increase its efforts through the existing mechanisms.

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## II. REPLIES FROM ORGANIZATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

### A. United Nations

#### Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Office at Vienna

At its thirty-fifth session, the Commission on the Status of Women adopted a draft resolution entitled "Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women" and recommended it to the Economic and Social Council for adoption. At its first regular session of 1991, the Council adopted it as resolution 1991/19, which constitutes the mandate for the Centre's future activities on behalf of Palestinian women.

### B. Specialized agencies

#### United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

In accordance with decision 4.2.1. adopted by the Executive Board at its 134th session, in September 1990 the Director-General launched an appeal to member States and foundations to contribute to the special fund opened at UNESCO in order to provide fellowships for students from the occupied territories. He also launched an appeal to 89 universities linked to the United Nations network "to grant research and further training fellowships to Palestinian researchers and lecturers in the various areas of science and technology". The Novosibirsk State University (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) and the University of Khartoum (Sudan) have offered fellowships. An amount of \$US 183,960 has so far been allocated under UNESCO's Participation Programme for 1990-1991 to enable some 22 Palestinians to study at universities abroad.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 43/178 of 20 December 1988, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to charge the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) with the supervision of the development of the programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people and to report to the Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in implementing the resolution. Pursuant to the resolution, the Secretary-General submitted a report on assistance to the Palestinian people (A/46/204-E/1991/80 and Add.2) to the Assembly at its forty-sixth session.

2. Following its consideration of the report of the Secretary-General, the General Assembly adopted resolution 46/201 of 20 December 1991 on assistance to the Palestinian people, in which it, *inter alia*, took note of the report of the Secretary-General on assistance to the Palestinian people; expressed its appreciation to the States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations that had provided assistance to the Palestinian people; requested the international community, the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to sustain and increase their assistance to the Palestinian people, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), taking into account the economic losses of the Palestinian people as a result of the Persian Gulf crisis; called for treatment on a transit basis of Palestinian exports and imports passing through neighbouring ports and points of exit and entry; also called for the granting of trade concessions and concrete preferential measures for Palestinian exports on the basis of Palestinian certificates of origin; further called for the immediate lifting of Israeli restrictions and obstacles hindering the implementation of assistance projects by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), other United Nations bodies and others providing economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory; reiterated its call for the implementation of development projects in the occupied Palestinian territory, including the projects mentioned in its resolution 39/233 of 18 December 1984; called for facilitation of the establishment of Palestinian development banks in the occupied Palestinian territory, with a view to promoting investment, production, employment and income therein; and requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its forty-seventh session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution.

3. On behalf of the Secretary-General, the Executive Director of UNCHS (Habitat) wrote to the various concerned sources requesting information on the implementation of the above-mentioned resolution. Given below are the summaries of the replies received.

4. Any additional information received will be issued as an addendum to the present report.

## II. REPLIES FROM THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

### A. United Nations

#### 1. Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs

5. At its thirty-sixth session, held at Vienna from 11 to 20 March 1992, the Commission on the Status of Women adopted draft resolution E/CN.6/1992/L.6, which, inter alia, requested the Secretary-General to review developments in the situation of Palestinian women and children in the occupied Palestinian territory and in the refugee camps, and to submit a report to the Commission at its thirty-seventh session using all available sources. The Division for the Advancement of Women will be responsible for the preparation of that report and its submission to the forthcoming session of the Commission.

#### 2. United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)

6. UNCHS (Habitat) prepared and submitted to the thirteenth session of the Commission on Human Settlements a report entitled "Housing requirements of the Palestinian people" (HS/C/13/2/Add.1). The report was prepared pursuant to Commission resolution 12/1, which had requested the Executive Director of UNCHS (Habitat) "to devise a national housing development strategy to the year 2000 for the Palestinian people based on the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000 in cooperation with the PLO, including the housing requirements of a future independent Palestinian State". After its consideration of the report the Commission adopted resolution 13/6, in which it took note of the report "with satisfaction" and requested "the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Executive Director and in cooperation with the PLO, to devise a plan for the implementation of a shelter strategy for the Palestinian people to the year 2000, as contained in the report of the Executive Director on the housing requirements of the Palestinian people, together with the provision of necessary funds". The Executive Director is presently in the process of preparing that report, on behalf of the Secretary-General, for submission to the fourteenth session of the Commission on Human Settlements, which will be held at Nairobi from 26 April to 5 May 1993.

7. UNCHS (Habitat) is also in the process of taking appropriate action with a view to preparing, on behalf of the Secretary-General, a report on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory for submission to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, through the Economic and Social Council. The report is being prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 46/162 of 19 December 1991, which requested the Secretary-General "to consider ways and means of improving the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory and, pending the exercise of their right to self-determination, to plan for concerted economic and social actions by the United Nations system".

### 3. United Nations Children's Fund

#### Introduction

8. Since 1980, UNICEF has supported programmes for Palestinian children and women in Jordan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Lebanon and the West Bank and Gaza. The programmes supported in close collaboration with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) and relevant United Nations agencies include: health; pre-school and primary education; women's programmes; water supply and sanitation; and a physiotherapy programme for the West Bank and Gaza Strip following the intifadah. The major objective of UNICEF assistance was to reduce infant mortality and morbidity through improvement of primary health care; immunization; health education; control of diarrhoeal diseases and acute respiratory infection; promotion of safe delivery practices and provision of safe drinking-water and sanitation. Following the crisis in the Persian Gulf a special effort was made to sustain these programmes. Over the period from 1980 to 1991, total UNICEF support for Palestinians increased from US\$ 212,278 in 1980 to \$957,276 in 1985, and \$1,773,863 in 1991.

9. The UNICEF Executive Board passed resolution 1991/15 requesting the Executive Director of UNICEF "to continue to urgently assess the situation of Palestinian children and women and to provide funds commensurate with the expanding needs of these children and women and to report to the 1992 session of the Executive Board on implementation". As a result, the total sum of funds approved for Palestinians had increased from \$1,773,863 in 1991 to \$3,234,400 in 1992. Of the latter, \$1,734,400 is dependent on supplementary funding being made available by donors.

#### Palestinians in Jordan

10. UNICEF cooperation with UNRWA in giving support to immunization activities, control of diarrhoeal disease and acute respiratory infection contributed considerably in reducing infant mortality rate from 59 to 35 per 1,000 live births during the period from 1980 to 1990. Immunization coverage levels for DPT3 (diphtheria-pertussis-tetanus) and OPV3 (oral polio vaccine) were increased from 30 per cent in 1980 to 99 per cent. During the same period, mortality due to diarrhoeal diseases was reduced from more than 3,000 to just 100 per year. Other programmes supported by UNICEF included income-generating activities and basic health education for mothers.

11. A new programme of cooperation for the period 1990-1994 approved by the Executive Board in 1990 aims to sustain the gains made in the fields of immunization, control of diarrhoeal diseases and acute respiratory infection. It also places increased emphasis on promoting safe motherhood in order to reduce birth defects. Two new programmes initiated are the early childhood development programme, which involves both kindergarten teachers and parents in effective stimulation of young children, and an action-oriented health project in which teachers are trained to pass vital information to children.

12. The type of assistance provided is provision of vaccines and syringes and the cold chain equipment programme; provision of oral rehydration salts; training of 100 UNRWA medical and paramedical staff in primary health care, safe motherhood and early detection of disabilities, and nutrition education for mothers; a comprehensive health education programme for women; support for a survey on child morbidity; and a media campaign on disability prevention.

13. Following the Gulf Crisis, most of the 350,000 Jordanian returnees from the Gulf were Palestinians. The sudden loss in remittances that their return entailed sent thousands of Palestinian families into instant poverty. Thus, in 1991, UNICEF cooperation with UNRWA and relevant non-governmental organizations in the field of health, education and early childhood development was stepped up.

14. In addition to the continued supply of sufficient vaccines, syringes and oral rehydration salts to meet the entire needs of the UNRWA expanded programme of immunization and the programme for the control of diarrhoeal diseases, paediatric antibiotic syrups for control of acute respiratory infection and essential drugs were provided. Support was given to Palestinian non-governmental organizations to expand health education for women. The manual "Your Child and Its Health" was distributed widely and incorporated into the curriculum of women's literacy and vocational training courses. UNICEF provided specialized testing equipment to the Disability Detection and Rehabilitation Centre in Bekaa camp and trained staff at the Centre to train mothers on early detection of disability. Support was also given for training 126 UNRWA medical and paramedical staff and 40 Palestinian traditional birth attendants on a range of basic health issues. Twenty Palestinian mothers selected from literacy classes were trained to be trainers in early childhood development. They in turn organized talks and discussions for mothers on the importance of early child development. Thirty-five Palestinian kindergarten teachers were trained to make use of the newly developed standardized kindergarten teaching manual. A total of 35 Palestinian early child specialists received training as part of the Jordan's community outreach programme. Learning materials and equipment were provided to 35 UNRWA and non-governmental kindergartens to create a more stimulating learning environment.

#### Palestinians in the Syrian Arab Republic

15. In collaboration with UNRWA, UNICEF has contributed to child survival. Partly as the result of universal child immunization being attained several years ahead of the 1990 target, the majority of mothers being made aware through an effective community education campaign on how to prevent dehydration during diarrhoeal diseases, provision of safe water supply and sewage network for 7,000 people and an increased quantity of water supply to an additional 6,000 people in eight camps, infant mortality was reduced from 41 to 33 per 1,000 live births during the period from 1984 to 1990. UNICEF, in collaboration with the General Organization of Palestinian Arab Refugees, the Syrian government agency responsible for Palestinians, has also provided educational materials, basic equipment, furniture and kindergarten teacher training in refugee camps.

16. In 1991 the Executive Board approved a new programme of assistance in the amount of \$1.6 million for the period from 1991 to 1994. The programme includes: (a) health (immunization, control of diarrhoeal diseases and acute respiratory infections); (b) women's development programme (which aims to reduce female illiteracy from 25 to 15 per cent, increase women's share in the labour force from 11 to 25 per cent and reduce neonatal and maternal mortality and morbidity by 25 per cent by 1994; and (c) early childhood development (to early childhood stimulation).

17. Given the hardship experienced by the Palestinian community as a result of the Crisis in the Persian Gulf, UNICEF-supported activities in 1991 focused particularly on the health programme. UNICEF continued to provide UNRWA with vaccines, syringes, cold chain equipment and oral rehydration salts. Social mobilization activities for both fields were integrated with national awareness-raising efforts. The acute respiratory infection control programme included development of recording and monitoring systems, medial promotion on prevention treatment and distribution of health education materials. UNICEF and UNFPA collaborated in training Palestinian traditional birth attendants.

18. The early childhood activities focused on improving teaching-learning materials, training kindergarten teachers and upgrading the quality of care in kindergartens. Increased attention is now being placed on early childhood development in the home.

19. Women's development activities concentrated on training of literacy instructors and programme supervision and on collaboration with Palestinian institutes providing women's income-generating activities. While overall market analysis has been undertaken to identify potential new fields of activities, toys and games were produced for use in kindergartens.

20. As UNICEF continues to work closely with UNRWA, increased attention is being given to fostering community action and to exploring more fully the potential of the extensive network of non-governmental organizations and other grassroots organizations in the Palestinian community.

#### Palestinians in Lebanon

21. In the past, UNICEF cooperated with international and Palestinian associates in training traditional birth attendants and nurses, and in promoting safe motherhood, diarrhoeal disease control, breast-feeding and personal hygiene. UNICEF channelled its assistance for immunization through UNRWA and also directly provided other health supplies, essential drugs and oral rehydration salts.

22. In the field of early childhood development, in cooperation with Palestinian organizations, UNICEF assisted the establishment of 22 modest child-care centres and helped to rehabilitate 24 others, bringing the total to 83 centres serving 7,760 children.

23. In a country where during the 15 years of civil war violence and destruction have become a way of life, the UNICEF-sponsored education for peace programme has been an important effort and continues to attract a large number of Palestinian children. During the summer of 1989 and again in 1990, 2,000 Palestinian children were brought together with Lebanese children in a summer camp so as to learn peaceful living. In the women's development programme, both collective and individual self-support income-generating projects continue to be supported.

24. Another focus of UNICEF support has been the rebuilding of war-damaged water and sanitation infrastructure in the Palestinian refugees camps. The activities included drilling, connecting new wells, rehabilitating old ones, providing water tanks and pipe connections, and provision of generators to 22 UNRWA schools. A sewage system was also installed in one camp.

25. The new five-year programme of assistance for the period 1992-1996 has been prepared for submission to the Executive Board in 1992 to continue to strengthen UNICEF activities in the main fields outlined above. As a programme review has indicated that facilities and services for Palestinians in centres for displaced persons are of a much lower level than those available for the camp population, the underserved centres will receive special attention during the new programme cycle. Another major priority will be development of more reliable baseline data and the situation of Palestinian women and children in Lebanon.

#### West Bank and Gaza

26. UNICEF began its programme of cooperation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1980 following the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 33/112 B of 18 December 1978, which called on United Nations agencies to provide humanitarian support to the Palestinian people.

27. During the 1980s, UNICEF, in cooperation with UNRWA, helped achieve and sustain universal child immunization and promote oral rehydration salts. UNICEF provided UNRWA with vaccines, syringes and cold chain supplies and contributed to the high expanded programme of immunization coverage among the registered refugee population. The use of oral rehydration salts and oral rehydration therapy has been promoted consistently. Village health workers, traditional birth attendants and supervisors have been trained. In the area of early childhood development, prototype child development centres for the early detection and rehabilitation of childhood disabilities were established; kindergarten teachers were trained; and sanitation facilities and basic furniture were provided. The relatively limited water supply project focused on the protection of rain-fed shallow wells in 25 villages. The joint UNRWA/UNICEF emergency physiotherapy programme has continued to evolve, with five centres now operating in Gaza and two in the West Bank. Since 1988, 4,500 patients have received physiotherapy rehabilitation for physical injuries.

28. In the field of education, UNICEF also cooperated with UNRWA in two projects aiming to respond to the acute problem of declining achievement levels of children in primary schools. A project to develop proper classroom diagnostic testing and an associated remedial education programme was initiated, together with a project to develop distance learning techniques and materials.

29. In response to resolution 1991/15, passed in April 1991 by the UNICEF Executive Board, the level of UNICEF presence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip was upgraded with the appointment of a resident international project officer. UNICEF's sub-office was moved from Ramallah to Jerusalem, with administrative support provided by UNDP.

30. The first comprehensive situation analysis of the status of Palestinian children in the West Bank and Gaza Strip has been prepared. The report includes assessment of the effects of the crisis in the Persian Gulf on children in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Highlights include dramatic economic decline, health services at risk, problems of educational achievement due to prolonged school closures, and concerns over the psychosocial health of Palestinian children.

31. Based on this analysis, UNICEF is submitting a three-year programme (1992-1994) to the Executive Board at its 1992 session, which delineates action in child health, education and programme for childhood disability and rehabilitation.

#### 4. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

32. Within the scope of its work programme, the UNCTAD secretariat has intensified its activities of assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory (West Bank and Gaza Strip). These have included the following activities.

33. A report entitled "Recent economic developments in the occupied Palestinian territory" (TD/B/L305) was prepared. This document constitutes the seventh annual report prepared by the UNCTAD secretariat, for consideration by the Trade and Development Board at its 38th session (first part). The report discusses the policy environment affecting the Palestinian economy since 1990 in the light of prevailing constraints amidst new pressures, including the impact of the Middle East crisis, Israeli measures and Palestinian initiatives. This is followed by an examination of aggregate economic indicators (GDP, GNP, savings, investment and consumptions); population, labour force and employment; and performance in selected sectors (including agriculture, industry and external trade, as well as tourism and the monetary and fiscal situation). The report also highlights elements of a programme for the immediate revival of the Palestinian economy and briefly reviews progress in the work of the Special Economic Unit (Palestinian people) at the UNCTAD secretariat.

34. During the period under review, the work of the Special Economic Unit continued to focus on the preparation of the intersectoral project on prospects for sustained economic and social development in the occupied Palestinian territory. This included initiating, reviewing and revising the 25 sectoral studies being prepared by experts in the occupied Palestinian territory, with work so far concentrating on the first part of each of these studies, covering the current situation and immediate needs in each of the areas under investigation. This part of the studies is now completed.

35. In order to guide work on the second part of each of the 25 individual studies, dealing with future prospects of the Palestinian economy, a technical study is nearing completion at the UNCTAD secretariat. The study provides an in-depth technical/quantitative framework for future prospects, to guide experts in the preparation of the second and third parts of the individual studies. It concentrates on alternative strategies and policy options to be consolidated and integrated under the respective parts of the intersectoral project. This should include the frame of a programme of action aimed at supporting the efforts of the Palestinian people in setting their economy on the path of sustained growth and development. The intersectoral project is now scheduled to be completed by the second half of 1992.

36. As part of the requirements for the parametric exercise in connection with the above-mentioned quantitative framework, work on the development of the UNCTAD secretariat's database on the Palestinian economy was further intensified. Statistical series, covering national income, population, labour and employment, balance of payments and external trade, were compiled, standardized and classified along the lines of the economic time series in use at the UNCTAD secretariat and stored in the computer facilities of the secretariat for future reference.

37. In addition to the above-mentioned report (TD/B/1305), the following publications were produced during the period under review and may be obtained from the Special Economic Unit at UNCTAD:

(a) "Select bibliography on the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory (West Bank and Gaza Strip)" (UNCTAD/RDP/SEU/5, Arabic and English only). This document contains a select bibliography of some 800 references issued in Arabic and English on the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory, including books, articles, monographs and United Nations documents. References are presented in two parts, covering those in Arabic and those in English, while in each part the references are grouped first according to the subject classification adopted by the United Nations Bibliographical Information Systems (UNBIS) and subsequently according to alphabetical sequence of authors.

(b) "Selected national accounts series of the occupied Palestinian territory (West Bank and Gaza Strip), 1968-1987" (UNCTAD/RDP/SEU/6, English only). It deals with the standardized national accounts series of the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory and is classified in accordance with the



economic time series in use at the UNCTAD secretariat. The series are based on official data published by the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics and exclude East Jerusalem.

(c) "The tourism sector and related services in the Palestinian territory under Israeli occupation" (UNCTAD/EDP/SEU/7). This in-depth study constitutes the first comprehensive investigation to date of the relatively neglected sector of tourism and related services in the occupied Palestinian territory of the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) and Gaza Strip. It draws on a field survey conducted in 1990/1991 and on various sources of statistical and qualitative information. It consists of five chapters examining the Palestinian tourism sector before 1967, the natural endowment and socio-cultural heritage of the occupied Palestinian territory; major factors affecting the Palestinian tourism sector since 1967, in particular the impact of Israeli policy measures; the economic role of the Palestinian tourism sector between 1967 and 1990, including the structure and performance of Palestinian tourism branches during the period; and immediate needs and prospects for reviving the tourism sector in the occupied Palestinian territory.

38. The UNCTAD secretariat has continued to cooperate with the UNCTAD/GATT International Trade Centre (ITC) with a view to finalizing the project document for the establishment of a marketing centre in the occupied territory for Palestinian agricultural goods. Meanwhile, consultations are also under way with ITC, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and UNDP for fielding a mission of experts to prepare a feasibility study for the establishment of a marketing centre for Palestinian industrial goods.

## 5. United Nations Development Programme

### Programme delivery

39. After the total interruption of field work during the war in the Persian Gulf, activities resumed at the same fast pace observed in 1990. Consequently, the 1991 project expenditures are expected to reach a level close to that of 1990, namely, \$11 million.

### Financial situation

40. The core resources of the Programme have been provided by the Governing Council through allocations from special programme resources. These allocations are the following:

Millions of United States dollars

Second cycle	(1980-1981)	3.5
Third cycle	(1982-1986)	10.0
Fourth cycle	(1987-1991)	12.0
Fifth cycle	(1992-1996)	15.0

41. Since the inception of the Programme, complementary resources have been provided by Italy (\$8.7 million), Japan (\$5 million), the Arab Gulf Programme for United Nations Development Organizations (AGFUND) (\$1 million), the United States of America (\$1 million), Jordan (\$457,000), Canada (\$400,000), Greece (\$80,000) and Tunisia (\$48,500).

42. These non-core resources have been provided under funds-in-trust or management service agreements.

43. The Administrator wishes to express his appreciation for the growing financial support enjoyed by the Programme.

Project highlights

(a) Income-generation

44. In the agriculture sector, new irrigation channels are being completed in the El-Duyuk area (West Bank), benefiting some 200 farmer, while modern irrigation equipment is now being distributed to farmers of the Gaza Strip under a project that is to benefit 1,000 farmers.

45. In Jericho, a honey-processing plant was installed, thereby completing a project that has provided 200 bee swarms and hives, medicines, training and technical support to nearly 300 beekeepers of both the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

46. In Nablus, construction of a marketing centre and industrial zone is nearing completion. Consisting of three large buildings, it will house 87 shops and workshops for light industries as well as a refrigerated storage room of 500 cubic metres for agricultural products. Approximately 300 business people will benefit from these new and modern installations.

47. The Business Development Centre is continuing its training activities in the fields of management, feasibility studies and marketing. The Centre will soon start its lending operations and work on the most promising requests for financial support is now being finalized.

48. In Gaza, the construction of a packing and grading facility for fruits and vegetables has started. Its completion is expected by the end of 1991. It will handle seven to eight tons of non-citrus fruits and vegetables per day per shift.

49. The manufacturing of the equipment for the citrus-processing plant to be installed in the Gaza Strip is progressing. The plant, which will have a capacity of 20 tons per hour and will thus be able to process one third of Gaza's citrus production, should be operational by the end of 1992.

(b) Social sectors

50. The construction of four new schools was completed in 1991. Two are in Nablus, one is in Hebron and the fourth is in the Gaza Strip. Three others are under way in the West Bank. In addition, new laboratories are being constructed and will be finalized before the end of the year at the Arab Medical College in Ramallah.

51. In the health field, rapid progress is being made on the construction of a new wing for the Hebron Hospital. It is expected to be completed by April 1992.

(c) Infrastructure

52. Water supply schemes were finalized in 14 villages of the West Bank. They consisted of the improvement of wells, the construction of pumping stations, the building of water reservoirs and the installation of distribution networks and house connections. Over 80,000 Palestinians are benefiting from these various schemes.

53. In the energy field, by installing electricity generators in eight villages of the West Bank and training local villagers in their use, maintenance and repair, thus ensuring an independent and reliable supply of energy, UNDP helped improve significantly the living and working conditions of some 45,000 Palestinians.

54. In the Gaza Strip, work is being finalized on the sewage collections, treatment and disposal systems in both the Jabaliya refugee camp and the city of Gaza. An operation and maintenance project has also been started with the purpose of giving full training to the technical staff of the Jabaliya village council and the Gaza municipality in order to ensure the smooth running of the system after the end of UNDP assistance.

5. United Nations Environment Programme

55. At its sixteenth session in May 1991, the Governing Council of UNEP considered the report prepared by the Executive Director on the environmental situation in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories (UNEP/GC.16/5).

56. The Council also adopted decision 16/13 in which it, inter alia, requested the Executive Director, pending the achievement by the United Nations of a political solution to the question of the occupied territories, to take the actions and measures capable of halting environmental deterioration in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories and to provide the necessary assistance for protecting the natural resources in the area and for securing harmonious living conditions for the entire population.

57. The Council also requested the Executive Director to take all necessary measures to complete the database of information about the environmental situation in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories.

58. UNEP has started consultations with the PLO through their representatives at Nairobi regarding the implementation of the provisions of the Governing Council decisions. The Executive Director of UNEP will report on this matter to the Governing Council, as requested, at its seventeenth session, in 1993.

#### 7. United Nations Population Fund

59. In the past, UNFPA has supported two types of activity, fellowships and primary health care research. Under its fellowship programme UNFPA allocated \$230,780 (1986-1990) to support six fellowships for post-graduate studies in demography and related topics. This training component was part of the UNDP-financed programme designed to enhance the educational level of faculty staff for teaching at the Bir Zeit and Al-Najah Universities in the occupied territory.

60. As regards primary health care research in the West Bank and Gaza, UNFPA allocated \$91,035 in the period 1987-1988 to support maternal and child health research and training activities at the WHO primary health care research centres. The long-term objectives of the project were to strengthen the capacity of the health services of the West Bank and Gaza to conduct health systems research at the primary and first referral levels, and to support research projects specifically relating to maternal and child health.

61. More recently, UNFPA has been requested by UNRWA to assist the Palestinian non-governmental organizations involved in providing expanded maternal health services in the West Bank and Gaza, and providing a level of care for women at high risk of complications to avoid maternal and perinatal morbidity and mortality. The immediate objectives to be fulfilled by 1995 are: (a) to have increased coverage of prenatal and postnatal care; (b) to have increased provision of hospital delivery for high-risk women; (c) to have conducted research and baseline studies essential to evaluation and planning of maternal/reproductive health care and the provision of family planning services; and (d) to have contributed to families' understanding of the need for and benefit of birth spacing related to maternal and reproductive care.

## 8. United Nations Relief and Works Agency

### Introduction

62. In 1992, UNRWA is continuing to provide education, health, relief and social services and other humanitarian assistance to more than 2.5 million Palestine refugees in its five fields of operation, namely Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In addition, emergency measures are being carried out in Lebanon and the West Bank and Gaza Strip. A full account of UNRWA's activities can be found in the reports of the Commissioner-General to the General Assembly. 1/

63. The following is a brief summary of the Agency's present activities. An indication of the level of UNRWA's assistance to the Palestine refugees is provided by the budget figures. In the biennium 1992-1993, UNRWA's regular budget is approximately \$572 million. The emergency measures in Lebanon and the occupied territory are planned to continue at a cost of \$40 million. In addition to the regular and emergency budgets, about \$40 million has been pledged or received since 1988 on the expanded programme of assistance referred to in paragraph 72 below. UNRWA employs approximately 18,500 staff, the vast majority of whom are themselves Palestine refugees, and is thus one of the largest employers in the Middle East.

### Education

64. The objective of the Agency's education programme is to provide, within the framework of the host countries' prescribed school curricula, general education at the elementary and preparatory levels, teacher and higher education, and vocational and technical education for Palestine refugees, in accordance with their educational needs, identity and cultural heritage. The programme operates with technical assistance from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). In the 1991/1992 school year, the Agency has more than 374,000 pupils enrolled in 636 schools staffed by almost 11,000 teachers and is providing training for more than 5,200 vocational and teacher trainees in its eight training centres. Schools and training centres in the occupied territory are presently open but, throughout the period of the intifadah, education has been severely disrupted by strikes, curfews, disturbances and closure orders imposed by the Israeli authorities. After many years of disruption, most schools in Lebanon are now operating relatively normally.

### Health

65. The UNRWA health programme comprises medical care and health protection and promotion delivered through 116 health centres and points, environmental health services in camps and distribution of food supplements to vulnerable groups. The Agency's health protection and promotion activities focus particularly upon disease control and maternal and child health care. Mental health projects have been started in the West Bank and Gaza. Medical care includes, inter alia, dental treatment. A physiotherapy programme is being

run in conjunction with UNICEF in six clinics in Gaza and five in the West Bank. The programme operates with technical assistance from the World Health Organization (WHO). The continuation of the intifadah and countermeasures employed by the Israeli authorities have had their effect upon UNRWA health services in the occupied territory. The Agency has had to give increased priority to emergency and casualty care provided in the camps, while at the same time maintaining its regular health activities in all areas in spite of interruptions caused by curfews, strikes, disturbances and the declaration of certain areas as closed military zones.

66. Besides continuing these services, the UNRWA health programme is focusing on the implementation of a number of new strategies in 1992, including family planning in the context of maternal health, reduction of doctor/patient ratios in health centres to a manageable level and the creation of consultative mechanisms to enable Palestinians to express their priorities in health care. The Agency's highest priority in respect of external funding will, however, be given to environmental health and, in particular, to planning and first-stage implementation of master plans for sewage disposal and safe water supply in the occupied territory and Lebanon. The Agency is also continuing with its project for constructing, equipping and commissioning a 232-bed hospital in Gaza at a cost of \$35 million, \$20 million of which represents capital costs and \$15 million operating costs for the first three years.

#### Relief and social services

67. The relief and social services programme provides support to the Palestine refugees ("special hardship cases") and facilitates self-reliance. The programme consists of assistance to special hardship cases, social case work, self-support grants and related skill training, women's programmes, rehabilitation of the disabled and assistance to refugees in emergency situations.

68. These activities are continuing in 1992. In view of the continuing deterioration of the socio-economic situation in the UNRWA area of operations, the number of special hardship cases will be increased Agency-wide by approximately 5 per cent, to more than 170,000. Emphasis is being placed on setting up small group enterprises to provide employment, especially for women from special hardship families and the disabled. The community-based rehabilitation programme for the disabled is continuing and a review of its development to date will be the basis of a joint UNRWA-non-governmental organization discussion of future strategy in May 1992. In the occupied territory, projects are being developed aiming at the vocational rehabilitation of the disabled, in particular former bread-winners injured during the intifadah.

#### Extraordinary measures

69. In response to the additional needs created by the intifadah and the Israeli response, UNRWA introduced a programme of extraordinary measures, which, beginning in early 1988, have been extended through 1989, 1990, 1991

and 1992. The large number of casualties resulting from the intifadah has led to a considerable expansion of the emergency medical programme. These measures are continuing in 1992, with five clinics open 24 hours a day and the remainder open in two shifts in Gaza, while 11 clinics run double shifts in the West Bank. Additional medical supplies and equipment, including 16 ambulances for the evacuation of casualties, have been purchased and the payment of hospital costs and subsidies has been increased.

70. Welfare services have been expanded to assist the families of those killed, disabled or detained and to cope with the far-reaching socio-economic effects of the intifadah. Additional food is being provided to needy people in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and needy families have received cash grants. An important element of the Agency's extraordinary measures in the occupied territory is the programme of general assistance and protection. The major component of this programme is the placing of 12 international staff members in the West Bank and 9 in the Gaza Strip as refugee affairs officers. These staff members facilitate Agency operation in the difficult prevailing circumstances and assist the refugee population in their day-to-day life. The refugee affairs officers help by their presence to lower tensions, especially during confrontations with the security forces, and to prevent maltreatment of the refugees, especially vulnerable groups such as women and children.

71. The situation prevailing in Lebanon has required the Agency to carry out programmes of emergency and extraordinary measures for a number of years. In 1992, these include, inter alia, distribution of foodstuffs, cash assistance to the most needy and assistance to displaced persons.

#### Expanded programme of assistance

72. In 1988, UNRWA launched an expanded programme of assistance consisting of approximately 200 projects to improve living conditions and infrastructure in the camps in the occupied territory. A target working figure of \$40 million had been received or pledged by March 1992. A high priority in the expanded programme of assistance is to ensure that refugees living in the 27 camps of the West Bank and Gaza Strip have decent shelter and a sanitary environment. Accordingly, substantial efforts are being made in repairing and constructing refugee shelters and in upgrading the standard of rehabilitation. The Agency will also continue to improve camp infrastructure and primary health care facilities, including construction and equipment of additional health centres, internal sewage systems and integration of camp water and sewerage schemes into municipal and regional systems. It has recently been decided to extend the scope of the expanded programme of assistance to cover not only the occupied territory but also the Agency's other three fields. Major related projects currently under way include shelter rehabilitation schemes and construction of sewage networks in refugee camps in the West Bank and Gaza.

73. In the aftermath of the war in the Persian Gulf, the socio-economic situation in the occupied territory, already serious after more than three years of intifadah and Israeli countermeasures, became critical. As part of its efforts to relieve unemployment and assist the stagnant economy, UNRWA is

implementing a new income-generating and job-creation scheme. Priority is being given to new or expanded enterprises that use labour-intensive methods of production. Individuals as well as cooperatives, partnerships and other types of groups are eligible to apply for loans. In Gaza, loans totalling more than \$200,000 have already been granted and loans are beginning to be made in the West Bank.

#### 9. World Food Programme

74. The WFP project, "Assistance to the Palestinian people", with a total WFP cost of \$871,900, has provided food aid and cash (for the purchase of local food) to assist Palestinian people in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The assistance was channelled through local institutions to hospital patients, orphanages and destitute families. Distribution of WFP commodities started in mid-September 1991 and terminated by the end of March 1992.

75. In order to sustain assistance, particularly to the most needy, WFP on 29 January 1992 transmitted to the Civil Administration (Israeli authorities) a note outlining its intention to continue assistance to targeted beneficiaries. To date, WFP has not received an official response from the Israeli authorities. The note proposes the extension of the feeding project, specifically to generate employment in local institutions and to provide food to hospital patients and orphans.

#### B. Specialized agencies

##### 1. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

76. At its twenty-fifth session, in November 1989, the FAO Conference requested the Director-General to "send a mission to study and evaluate the situation of the agricultural sector in the occupied Palestinian territory, taking into consideration the conditions of the farmers under the existing occupation policies and practices, and to prepare a report comprising possible technical interventions to be executed by FAO". In addition, the Conference requested the Director-General to organize a symposium on the Palestinian agricultural sector and to include the occupied Palestinian territory in future FAO programmes and activities.

77. The Symposium on the Palestinian Agricultural Sector took place at Rome from 9 to 11 October 1991. It was attended by 15 consultants and experts selected from the occupied Palestinian territories in the West Bank and Gaza in their personal technical capacity and by representatives from the United Nations organizations (the Division for Palestinian Rights of the Office for Political and General Assembly Affairs and Secretariat Services; UNDP; UNCTAD; ITC; the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD); WFP; UNRWA; and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA); the League of Arab States, the "Al-Quds" Open University and the PLO.



78. Papers were presented on the following three subjects, leading to constructive discussions on identifying measures to improve agricultural development in the occupied Palestinian territories:

(a) The present situation of the agricultural sector in the occupied Palestinian territories;

(b) Present agricultural policies and their impact on agricultural development in the occupied Palestinian territories;

(c) Institutional support to agricultural development in the occupied Palestinian territories.

79. The recommendations of the symposium included the urgent need for a long-term plan for water development and conservation, studies on land and soil conservation, studies on dry-land farming, regulation of fertilizers and other chemicals, seeds and seedling production, national institutions for agricultural services, development of livestock, national institutions for agricultural data and assistance in the marketing of produce.

80. A mission to the occupied Palestinian territories was fielded from 23 August to 6 September 1991. It was led by Mr. Declan Walton, former Deputy Director-General of FAO, and also comprised Mr. Adel Cortas, Assistant to the Assistant Director-General, Economic and Social Policy Department, and Mr. Rene Branckaert, Animal Production Officer, Animal Production and Health Division, FAO.

81. The 26th FAO Conference, held in November 1991, endorsed the approach to technical assistance recommended by the mission and attached particular attention to action in the following areas: preparation of a comprehensive strategy as well as programmes and projects to ensure the sustainability of irrigated farming; recommendations for the future of citrus production in Gaza in the light of increasing water salinity and decreasing water availability for agriculture; preparation of a comprehensive study on the development of agricultural institutions, particularly for agricultural planning, credit and marketing; preparation of detailed studies on the issues highlighted by the mission with regard to pests and diseases, soil erosion, use of agricultural by-products for livestock feed, maintenance and repair of pumps and farm equipment, and development of rangelands. The problems of environmental degradation reported by the mission were considered to deserve special attention.

82. The Conference requested the Director-General to bring the recommendations of the mission and the conclusions of the Conference to the attention of all potential donors who might be interested in providing support for the Palestinian agricultural sector, either through FAO or directly under their own programmes. In addition, the Conference requested the Director-General to approach UNDP and other possible multilateral and bilateral donors for extrabudgetary support that might be required for specific projects formulated in the course of further work.

83. In order to fulfil the above-mentioned recommendations of the 26th FAO Conference, negotiations are under way with the ESCWA/FAO Joint Agriculture Division at Amman and the UNDP Office at Jerusalem for organizing a new joint FAO/UNDP identification/formulation mission during 1992. The objective of the mission is the formulation of an umbrella technical assistance project for presentation to potential donors. Furthermore, contacts are being made with all potential donors, multilateral funding agencies, regional development banks and funds, to identify and formulate agricultural investment projects for the occupied territories. All programme activities will be planned and implemented in cooperation with the UNDP Office at Jerusalem.

## 2. General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade

84. With regard to the matters raised in General Assembly resolution 44/235, GATT wishes to draw attention to the following provisions of the Agreement.

85. Article V, concerning freedom of transit, is aimed at ensuring that goods in transit through the territories of contracting parties are not subject to delays and restrictions and are exempt from customs duties and other charges, except charges commensurate with administrative expenses or with the cost of services rendered. It should be noted, however, that these obligations apply only to traffic in transit to or from contracting parties. Any contracting party is, however, free to extend such benefits to countries other than contracting parties.

86. In respect of preferential treatment of exports, GATT wishes to point out that the decision of 28 November 1979 of the contracting parties on differential and more favourable treatment, reciprocity and fuller participation of developing countries (the so-called enabling clause) foresees that developed contracting parties to GATT may accord preferential tariff treatment - and in certain circumstances preferential treatment with respect to non-tariff measures - to products originating in developing countries in accordance with the generalized system of preferences. The selection of developing countries that would benefit from such preferences is a matter to be decided by each preference-granting Government.

## 3. International Fund for Agricultural Development

87. Article 2 of the Agreement establishing IFAD states that "the object of the fund shall be to mobilize additional resources to be made available on concessional terms for agricultural development in developing member States".

88. Section 1 (b), article 7, of the same Agreement lays down, inter alia that IFAD is to provide financing only to developing States that are members of IFAD.

89. On the eligibility of a State to become a member of IFAD, section 1 (a) of article 3 states that "membership of the fund shall be open to any State,

member of the United Nations or any of its specialized agencies, or of the International Atomic Energy Agency".

90. IFAD therefore has not provided any assistance to the Palestinian people.

#### 4. International Labour Organisation

91. ILO is pursuing its efforts with a view to implementing and developing its technical assistance programme in the occupied Arab territories. Its current projects concern vocational training, trade union training and rehabilitation of handicapped persons.

92. Furthermore, the Director-General of ILO is preparing his annual report on the situation of the Arab workers of the occupied Arab territories, to be submitted to the forthcoming International Labour Conference in June 1992. Two missions to the region, one to the Arab countries and the other to Israel and the occupied Arab territories, have been sent recently with a view to collecting the latest available information on this subject.

#### 5. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

93. In addition to UNESCO's programme of assistance to the occupied territories in the field of education and culture, UNESCO has provided in 1991 financial assistance of US\$ 50,000 to Palestinian educational institutions affected by the crisis in the Persian Gulf under its special emergency assistance funds devoted to the crisis.

#### 6. United Nations Industrial Development Organization

94. The Fourth General Conference of UNIDO in November 1991 adopted, inter alia, resolution GC.4/Res.7, in which it requested UNIDO to increase its technical assistance to the Palestinian people in close cooperation with the PLO.

95. Following the adoption of resolution GC.4/Res.7, a focal point and a team of staff members were created within UNIDO to monitor the development of the Palestinian industrial sector and to better develop and coordinate the activities related to technical assistance to the Palestinian people.

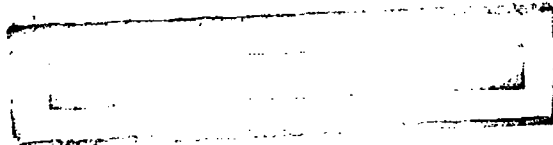
96. In February 1992, the focal point visited UNDP in Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza Strip, to initiate and establish a foundation for future collaboration with UNDP with respect to programme and project development and implementation. A joint review was undertaken on the progress made in preparation for a UNDP needs assessment report covering technical assistance to the Palestinian people. As a result of the mission and the review, areas have been identified where UNIDO assistance may be required in the framework of ongoing and future UNDP activities.

97. In view of the general stringency of financial resources, UNIDO is planning to secure extrabudgetary resources to initiate new activities and to provide technical services to the UNDP programme for assistance to the Palestinian people in the industry sector at programme and project level.

**Notes**

1/ The report for the period 1 July 1990 to 30 June 1991 can be found in Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/46/13); the report for the period 1 July 1991 to 30 June 1992 will be presented to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session.

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
Forty-eighth session  
Item 12 of the preliminary list\*  
REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL  
COUNCIL

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL  
Substantive session of 1993  
Item 4 (b) of the provisional  
agenda  
COORDINATION QUESTIONS:  
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING  
OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL  
COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES BY  
THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES  
AND THE INTERNATIONAL  
INSTITUTIONS ASSOCIATED  
WITH THE UNITED NATIONS

Assistance to the Palestinian people

Report of the Secretary-General

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\* A/48/50.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 43/178 of 20 December 1988, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to charge the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS) (Habitat) with supervising the development of the programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people and to report to the Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in implementing the resolution. Pursuant to the resolution, the Secretary-General submitted a report on assistance to the Palestinian people (A/47/212-E/1992/54) to the Assembly at its forty-seventh session.

2. Following its consideration of the Secretary-General's report, the General Assembly adopted resolution 47/170 of 22 December 1992 on assistance to the Palestinian people, in which it, inter alia, took note of the report of the Secretary-General on assistance to the Palestinian people; expressed its appreciation to the States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations that had provided assistance to the Palestinian people; requested the international community, the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to sustain and increase their assistance to the Palestinian people, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), taking into account the economic losses of the Palestinian people as a result of the Persian Gulf crisis; urged the Government of Israel to accept de jure applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, to all territories occupied by Israel since 1967 and to abide scrupulously by the provisions of that Convention; called for treatment on a transit basis of Palestinian exports and imports passing through neighbouring ports and points of exit and entry; also called for the granting of trade concessions and concrete preferential measures for Palestinian exports on the basis of Palestinian certificates of origin; further called for the immediate lifting of Israeli restrictions and obstacles hindering the implementation of assistance projects by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), other United Nations bodies and others providing economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory; reiterated its call for the implementation of development projects in the occupied Palestinian territory, including the projects referred to in its resolution 39/223 of 18 December 1984; called for facilitation of the establishment of Palestinian development banks in the occupied Palestinian territory, with a view to promoting investment, production, employment and income therein; recognized the need for convening a seminar on assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, and, in that regard, suggested to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to consider, in its programme for 1992-1993, convening such a seminar, taking into account the assistance needs of the Palestinian people in the light of the developments in the region; and requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its forty-eighth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution.

3. On behalf of the Secretary-General, the Executive Director of UNCHS (Habitat) wrote to the various concerned sources requesting information on the implementation of the resolution. Given below are summaries of the replies received.

4. Any additional information received will be issued as an addendum to the present report. The seminar on assistance to the Palestinian people requested in General Assembly resolution 47/170 and referred to in paragraph 2 above was held in Paris from 26 to 29 April 1993. The report of the seminar is being issued under the symbol A/48/168-E/1993/62.

## II. REPLIES FROM THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

### A. United Nations

#### 1. United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)

5. UNCHS (Habitat) prepared and submitted to the fourteenth session of the Commission on Human Settlements, held at Nairobi from 26 April to 5 May 1993, a report entitled "Housing requirements of the Palestinian people" (HS/C/14/2/Add.1). The report was prepared pursuant to Commission resolution 13/6, which had requested the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Executive Director and in cooperation with the PLO to devise a plan for the implementation of a shelter strategy for the Palestinian people to the year 2000, as contained in the report of the Executive Director on the housing requirements of the Palestinian people, together with the provision of necessary funds.

6. After its consideration of the report, the Commission on Human Settlements adopted resolution 14/9, in which it took note with satisfaction of the report of the Executive Director and requested the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Executive Director and in cooperation with the PLO, to take all the appropriate measures for the implementation of a national Palestinian housing strategy in the light of the report of the Executive Director and the recommendations contained therein in accordance with the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000, as soon as possible. The Commission also requested the Executive Director of UNCHS (Habitat) to take appropriate measures and conduct consultations with a view to facilitating the training and formation of the required Palestinian technical cadres necessary to secure the national housing requirements of the Palestinian people. A report on the actions taken by UNCHS (Habitat) in implementation of resolution 14/9 will be submitted to the fifteenth session of the Commission on Human Settlements, to be held at Nairobi from 19 to 25 April 1995.

7. UNCHS (Habitat) is also at present in the process of preparing, on behalf of the Secretary-General, a report on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory for submission to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. The report is being prepared pursuant to Assembly resolution 46/162 of 19 December 1991, which requested the Secretary-General to consider ways and means of improving the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory and, pending the exercise of their right to self-determination, to plan for concerted economic and social actions by the United Nations system (see also E/1993/64).



## 2. United Nations Children's Fund

### UNICEF programmes for Palestinian children and women in the occupied territories and neighbouring States

#### (a) Occupied territories

8. In accordance with its mandate, UNICEF has long been associated with efforts aimed at providing humanitarian support to Palestinian children and women in the occupied territories. For over a decade, its Executive Board has repeatedly confirmed its commitment to the cause of alleviating the situation of these vulnerable children and women by adopting specific programmes for them.

9. Following the adoption of General Assembly resolution 33/112 B of 18 December 1978, UNICEF began its programme of assistance in 1980 to the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The Executive Board periodically renewed UNICEF programme support in the territories, and adopted long-term programmes of assistance in 1984, 1988 and 1992.

10. In 1991, the Executive Board, in its decision 1991/15, requested the Executive Director to continue to urgently assess the situation of Palestinian children and women and to provide funds commensurate with the expanding needs of those children and women, and to report to the 1992 session of the Executive Board on implementation. Thus, the 1992-1994 programme of cooperation for the West Bank and Gaza Strip represents part of the UNICEF response to that directive.

11. UNICEF is committed to providing a total of \$2,175,000 from its general resources during the three-year period of the current programme and will seek an additional \$2,175,000 from specific-purpose contributions from donors, out of which almost \$1 million has already been received in the first year, with additional pledges under negotiation.

12. Major objectives of the programme include the reduction of child and maternal mortality and morbidity; the expansion and upgrading of early childhood development activities; improvement in the quality and relevance of education both in and out of school; and the extension of physiotherapeutic and psychosocial rehabilitation services for disabled children. The overall strategy of the UNICEF-assisted programme is to strengthen the implementation capacity of local organizations and to promote cooperation among service providers through joint policy planning, information sharing and implementation.

13. Among more specific objectives of the programme, UNICEF is committed to providing support to 42 local clinics run by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) to sustain and expand immunization coverage to reach 200,000 Palestinian children, with measures aimed at controlling diarrhoeal diseases; reaching 500,000 mothers and children under the anaemia control project; strengthening the capacity of 200 local clinics to control acute respiratory infections; supporting 500 primary schools; providing training for 5,000 teachers, and also local physiotherapists, social and health workers; providing physiotherapy services to 3,000 children and supporting rehabilitation of children with psychological and social problems arising from exposure to conflict situations. UNICEF undertakes these activities in close

cooperation and coordination with international and national agencies, notably with UNRWA and the Palestinian Red Crescent Society.

14. UNICEF also implements specific programmes of assistance to Palestinian children and women in three countries, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic.

(b) Jordan

15. The programme in Jordan with annual funding of \$200,000 from general resources and \$200,000 from specific-purpose contributions, aims to serve the needs of non-camp Palestinians residing in squatter and poor areas of the Amman-Zarqa region, and other major urban areas of the country. It has become clear that this is the most important UNICEF target group, while the camp Palestinians are reasonably well covered by UNRWA services. As a means of reaching this target group better, UNICEF cooperates with over 40 local and international non-governmental organizations. The programme has three components: child and maternal health, education and the urban family, and is closely linked with and complementary to the main UNICEF country programme in Jordan.

(c) Syrian Arab Republic

16. The programme for Palestinians in the Syrian Arab Republic has the same funding levels as that for Palestinians in Jordan above, and comprises three components: child and maternal health, women's development and early childhood development. While continuing to maintain cooperation with UNRWA and the government agency for Palestinians, GOPAR, a special emphasis is placed on fostering community action and mobilizing the extensive network of non-governmental organizations that exists in the Palestinian community.

17. Health-related interventions aim to sustain and expand achievements in protection against preventable diseases, in control of diarrhoeal diseases and acute respiratory infections. The women's development project has as its major objectives the reduction of female illiteracy and the increase of women's share in the paid labour force. The early childhood development project continues efforts to reduce trauma and difficulties associated with growing up in a refugee community and to develop basic social and coping skills of Palestinian children.

(d) Lebanon

18. The programme for Palestinians in Lebanon has been approved with an annual financing level of \$350,000 from general resources and the same amount from specific-purpose contributions. Sectoral objectives include the reduction of child and maternal mortality, promotion of early childhood stimulation opportunities and facilities, empowering women with education and vocational skills to improve their participation in the economic life of the community, and expanding and improving water supply and sanitation, primarily for displaced Palestinians. The programme strategy emphasizes strengthening coordination between partners of programme implementation, fostering community action through encouraging self-help schemes and mobilizing the participation of Palestinian non-governmental organizations as well as enhancing their implementation capacities.

### 3. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

19. Work of the UNCTAD secretariat on assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory during the period from March 1992 to March 1993 was intensified in the four main areas of activity: (a) monitoring and analysing policies and practices of Israeli occupation authorities that hamper economic development in the occupied Palestinian territory; (b) investigating the impact of such policies and practices on main economic sectors; (c) developing the database, including the dissemination of quantitative and qualitative information on the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory; and (d) coordinating with, and contributing to, the relevant activities of the organizations of the United Nations system in response to General Assembly resolutions on assistance to the Palestinian people and on economic and social conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory. In carrying out work in those areas, close contacts were maintained with Palestine, in addition to consultations with other parties concerned.

20. With regard to monitoring, work was undertaken for the preparation of the eighth report of the secretariat on assistance to the Palestinian people for consideration by the Trade and Development Board at the first part of its thirty-ninth session. In addition to highlighting recent developments in the policy environment, including the continuing impact of the Gulf crisis on the Palestinian economy in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the report focused on identifying pressing problems and needs and recommending feasible measures for action aimed at reviving the Palestinian economy and improving the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people.

21. Within the context of the intersectoral project investigating prospects for sustained economic and social development in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, work was intensified on the preparation of the 25 in-depth field studies covering the main economic and social sectors. Part one of those studies, dealing with an analysis of the prevailing situation, identification of problems and needs, and consideration of measures for immediate action, has been largely completed. Concurrently, the study initiated by the Special Economic Unit on a conceptual and substantive framework to provide guidelines for the preparation of parts two and three of the field studies dealing with future prospects has also been completed, along with a detailed supplement on various technical aspects of the framework. Accordingly, a quantitative framework has been established investigating, under different scenarios, possibilities for the sustained development of the Palestinian economy in the West Bank and Gaza Strip for the period 1990-2010.

22. In accordance with the work plan of the intersectoral project, a meeting of experts, Palestinian and international, which was also attended by representatives of different United Nations agencies and regional organizations, was convened at Geneva from 19 to 22 May 1992 (a) to discuss and adopt the findings of part one of the 25 in-depth individual studies, thus providing a consolidated report on the prevailing economic and social situation in the occupied Palestinian territory along with specific measures appealing to the Israeli occupation authorities, to the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and to the international community for immediate action; and (b) to consider the quantitative framework for investigating the future prospects of the Palestinian economy in the West Bank and Gaza Strip under parts two and

three of the individual studies. Consultations are now under way with all the directly concerned parties on the outcome of the meeting of experts, on the quantitative framework, and other related aspects of the intersectoral project. It is intended to finalize and issue the report of the experts and the study of the quantitative framework upon completion of the consultations.

23. As part of the requirements of the intersectoral project, work on the development of the secretariat database on the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory was intensified. Available statistical series covering national income, population, labour and employment, balance-of-payments and external trade for the period 1968-1987 have been standardized and classified along the lines of the economic time series in use in the UNCTAD secretariat and stored in the computer facilities of the secretariat for future reference. These series have also been issued (UNCTAD/RDP/SEU/6 and UNCTAD/DSD/SEU/1) and disseminated widely, including to research and educational institutions, so as to provide a uniform set of statistics on the economy of the West Bank and Gaza Strip covering the 20-year period 1968-1988.

24. Work is currently under way on finalizing part one of a selected number of the 25 field studies, which deals with an analysis of developments in various economic and social sectors over the past 25 years, problems and needs, and measures for immediate action. Those selected studies will be issued individually as and when finalized.

25. At the request made during the thirty-ninth session of the Trade and Development Board, based on Principle 23 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, the UNCTAD secretariat has initiated the preparation of an in-depth study of the environmental dimension of Israeli policies in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and their impact on the economic and social situation of the Palestinian people. The study, which is being prepared within the context of the intersectoral project, is structured to deal with (a) present environmental conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory, major problem areas and their bearing on the social and economic situation; (b) present and future areas of environmental concern that are expected to have a growing influence on development prospects in the West Bank and Gaza Strip beyond the year 2000; and (c) policy guidelines and project ideas for immediate and long-term action at the local, regional and international levels.

26. In line with the work programme requirements and the provisions of General Assembly resolutions adopted during the period under review, the UNCTAD secretariat has stepped up its efforts to strengthen coordination and cooperation with the relevant organizations of the United Nations system and with regional and non-governmental organizations involved in work on the economic and social situation of the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This has included contributing to meetings, participating in inter-agency discussions and field mission to Tunis and Cairo for consultations and data collection.

#### 4. United Nations Office at Vienna

27. The Division for the Advancement of Women had prepared a report, in pursuance of Economic and Social Council resolution 1992/16 on the situation of Palestinian women in the occupied territory, which was presented to the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-seventh session, held at Vienna from 17 to 26 March 1993, as a note by the Secretary-General. It describes the present situation of women in the critical areas of family life, economy and employment, education and health, with special attention to psychological well-being.

28. The Commission on the Status of Women transmitted draft resolution VII, entitled "Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women", to the Economic and Social Council for adoption. In that resolution the Secretary-General was requested to assist in and review the situation of Palestinian women using all available resources, including missions of experts to the occupied Palestinian territory, and to submit a report on the implementation of the resolution, including recommendations and a programme of action aimed at improving conditions of Palestinian women under Israeli occupation, to the Commission at its thirty-eighth session (see E/1993/27, sect. I). The Division for the Advancement of Women will be responsible for the preparation of that report.

#### 5. United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

29. At its sixteenth session, held at Amman from 30 August to 3 September 1992, ESCWA adopted two resolutions on Palestinian development. The first, resolution 184 (XVI), relates, inter alia, to the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian Arab people and calls for supporting the secretariat's activities, which include studies, conferences, seminars and workshops concerned with the Palestinian people, giving priority to rebuilding the institutional framework for development.

30. Resolution 182 (XVI) declares the period 1994-2003 a Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Decade for Western Asia. Under the resolution, efforts relating to reconstruction and rehabilitation of development activities will be mobilized. It requests ESCWA to provide technical assistance for the implementation of projects during the Decade for various countries and areas, including the occupied Palestinian territory.

31. ESCWA initiated the implementation of the above-mentioned resolutions by undertaking field missions in coordination with the UNDP office at Jerusalem (Occupied Palestinian Territory). A mission was undertaken by the ESCWA Regional Adviser on Development Issues and Policies aimed at analysing the current situation in the occupied Palestinian territory and proposing an integrated programme of work for ESCWA. A closer coordination process has been initiated between ESCWA and UNDP/Jerusalem whereby joint activities will be discussed and coordinated. Field visits and ESCWA technical assistance to institutions in the occupied Palestinian territory have also been initiated. A second mission was undertaken to the occupied territory by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)/ESCWA to prepare a report

on the rehabilitation of the agricultural sector in the territory and to identify priority projects (see paras. 35 and 36).

32. A training workshop and planning and appraisal of rural development projects was organized by the joint FAO/ESCWA Division in collaboration with the UNDP office at Jerusalem. The workshop, which took place at Jerusalem from 26 July to 12 August 1992, was attended by 32 trainees from the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

33. ESCWA contributed actively to the discussions of the above-mentioned seminar held at UNESCO headquarters in Paris from 26 to 29 April 1993. ESCWA gave a presentation to the seminar that centred on ESCWA's recent experience and priority areas and projects related to development assistance to the Palestinian people.

34. Arrangements are being made to carry out the following activities in 1993:

(a) A socio-economic survey on the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories;

(b) Building up the institutional infrastructure for development in the occupied Palestinian territories with special emphasis on the development of financing institutions;

(c) Impact of Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories;

(d) Promoting employment opportunities in the occupied Palestinian territories. A plan to hold a seminar on the issue is under consideration.

35. ESCWA, in collaboration with FAO, has completed a study on the rehabilitation of the agricultural sector in the occupied Palestinian territories. Two field missions to the territories were undertaken by the staff of the Joint ESCWA/FAO Agriculture Division in order to identify and prepare project documents for priority development projects to be submitted to donors for possible funding. The following project documents are being finalized:

(a) Land reclamation and development;

(b) Rehabilitation of deep wells, mainly for irrigation purposes;

(c) Rehabilitation of springs and irrigation canals;

(d) The establishment of a central laboratory for veterinary services.

36. Coordination is being made with the UNDP office at Jerusalem and with FAO to pursue the implementation of a group of agricultural and water resource development projects.

37. Discussions are under way with the Islamic Development Bank for a joint programme of action to support the development in the occupied Palestinian territories.

## B. Specialized agencies

### 1. International Fund for Agricultural Development

38. While IFAD is interested in the operations in the occupied territories, the Agreement establishing IFAD and its rules and procedures unfortunately limits assistance to countries that are members of the Fund. Article 3 (1A) of the Agreement establishing IFAD stipulates that membership of the Fund shall be opened to any State member of the United Nations or of any of its specialized agencies, or of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). In addition, article 7 (1B) of the same document states that financing by the Fund shall be provided to developing States that are members of the Fund or to intergovernmental organizations in which such members participate.

39. IFAD looks forward to being able to extend assistance in the near future to the Palestinian people in line with its mandate.

### 2. International Labour Organisation

#### ILO technical activities for the benefit of workers and employers in the occupied Arab territories

40. ILO has had a technical cooperation programme for the Arabs in the occupied Arab territories since 1980. This activity is in response to a request from the International Labour Conference to the Governing Body and the Director-General of the Office to provide all types of assistance and support to Arab citizens in Palestine and the other occupied Arab territories to strengthen their economic and technical capabilities and to counteract the effects of the Israeli occupation and settlement policy. Funds from the Organisation's regular budget for technical cooperation have been allocated to projects in the occupied territories.

41. The technical cooperation programme is prepared and updated in line with the needs indicated by the beneficiaries themselves. To define those needs, the exchange of views that takes place during the missions sent each year by the Director-General to Israel, the occupied Arab territories and the Arab countries of the region are taken into consideration. All the parties concerned are consulted, as well as the PLO, in accordance with the resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly concerning assistance to the Palestinian people. In addition, the discussions held at inter-agency and other meetings concerning economic and social assistance extended to the Palestinian people under the auspices of the United Nations are taken into consideration.

42. Under inter-agency agreements, ILO is able to collaborate in implementing its programme with UNDP in East Jerusalem to carry out its programme of assistance to the Palestinian people. This collaboration takes two forms: ILO may provide UNDP with experts for UNDP projects being carried out on the spot or, in the case of an ILO project, UNDP takes on the practical coordination and provides its good offices vis-à-vis the Israeli authorities and its knowledge of the area. So far, and since 1980, this collaboration has always been efficient and productive, and it meets with the satisfaction of both agencies.

43. The current ILO projects cover trade union training and vocational rehabilitation of the handicapped. Other projects are now in the pipeline, mainly a series of seminars for Palestinian employers, including chambers of commerce and industry. Concerning trade union training, ILO held three courses for some 30 participants in Nablus, Bethlehem and Gaza in April-May 1992, and similar arrangements have been made for 1993.

44. The project concerning the vocational rehabilitation of the handicapped, organized jointly with UNDP and UNRWA, began in October 1991. Three consultants were sent for a period of six weeks to hold specialized vocational training seminars for personnel responsible locally for vocational rehabilitation and training as well as placement of the handicapped. This project is to be implemented over a three-year period and is continuing in 1993.

45. A continuation of the activity is foreseen in other areas of competence of ILO in which its expertise and experience can be useful - such as vocational training - and there are plans to continue consultations to determine other needs, such as those of small enterprises. ILO attaches considerable importance to the extension of its technical cooperation programmes to assist the Palestinian people in the occupied territories. It is to be hoped that circumstances will allow for the further development of the programme.

### 3. United Nations Industrial Development Organization

46. While the general scarcity of financial resources still prevails, UNIDO approved two projects in late 1992:

(a) Technical advisory services (\$49,000) from its own resources (Industrial Development Fund), to allow provision of services to the industry in the occupied territory at short notice;

(b) Training programme for small industries (\$180,000), under a trust fund from Japan to be carried out in September 1993, where preparatory work has been completed.

47. It is hoped that the renewed effort of UNIDO, though modest, will further bear fruit in the future.

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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
DECLARATION ON THE  
GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE  
TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES  
AND PEOPLES BY THE  
SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND  
THE INTERNATIONAL  
INSTITUTIONS ASSOCIATED  
WITH THE UNITED NATIONS

Assistance to the Palestinian people

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

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## II. REPLIES FROM THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

### A. United Nations

#### 6. Department of Political Affairs of the Secretariat

1. In response to paragraph 10 of General Assembly resolution 47/170, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People convened a seminar on assistance to the Palestinian people as part of its programme of work for 1993. The seminar was held at the headquarters of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Paris from 26 to 29 April 1993, with the participation of United Nations bodies and agencies involved in projects in the occupied Palestinian territory, donor countries, regional organizations, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations active in the field, as well as Palestinian and other experts. The report of the seminar has been transmitted to the Secretary-General by the Chairman of the Committee in a letter dated 10 May 1993 (A/48/168-E/1993/62 and Corr.1).

#### 7. Department of Economic and Social Development of the Secretariat

2. The work of the former Department in relation to assistance to the Palestinian people has been focused to a large extent on development planning. At the invitation of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Department participated in the independent mission for the review of the UNDP programme in the occupied Palestinian territories. The planning adviser of the Department was one of three professionals on a team led by Ambassador Robert J. van Schaik (Netherlands), which gathered data and evaluated the UNDP programme in the occupied territories from 10 to 31 October 1992. The mission recommended, among other things, that UNDP should assist Palestinian efforts to draw up an initial development plan, as well as sector plans based on it.

#### 8. United Nations Environment Programme

3. The activities of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in assistance to the Palestinian people can be subdivided into three categories.

##### (a) Activities implemented directly by UNEP

##### Environmental situation in the occupied Palestinian territories

4. In 1987, the Governing Council of UNEP adopted decision 14/11, entitled "The environmental situation in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories", requesting the Executive Director, within the mandate of UNEP, to provide, within available resources, assistance to the Palestinian people and particularly to the municipalities of the occupied Palestinian territories. This was to be done in collaboration with UNDP and in coordination with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), in order to help them protect and

improve their environment in the occupied Palestinian territories. The Council also requested the Executive Director to report to the Council at its fifteenth session on the environmental situation and the implementation of the decision.

5. The Executive Director recruited an experienced consultant who was familiar with the occupied territories to carry out a preliminary assessment of the environmental situation in the occupied Palestinian territories. The consultant was admitted to Israel in January 1989 as a private tourist. In that capacity, the consultant was unable to have access to information, nor was he able to corroborate it. The Executive Director submitted the findings and conclusions of the consultant in his report to the Governing Council at its fifteenth session.

6. In 1989, the Governing Council adopted decision 15/8, in which it considered that the report of the Executive Director was inadequate and that it must be updated and the information it contained corroborated. This further required the formation of a group of consultants specializing in environmental problems, with a mandate to prepare a comprehensive report on the environmental situation in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories, making use of relevant data and information from sources provided by the population of the territories, as well as by the States and regional and international organizations concerned. The Council also requested the Executive Director to submit to the Council at its sixteenth session a comprehensive report based on the findings reached by the group of consultants.

7. The Executive Director recruited a group of experienced consultants specializing in environmental problems, with a mandate to prepare a comprehensive report on the environmental situation in the occupied territories. The group was unable to visit the occupied territories, but was able to collect information and data from a wide range of sources that appeared to be reasonably authoritative. The findings of the group were submitted by the Executive Director to the Governing Council at its sixteenth session.

8. The report referred to the difficulty of obtaining relevant data since most of the published information on the occupied territories tended to be concerned with political, historical and juridical aspects of the question, and rarely contained sound environmental data.

9. In 1991, the Governing Council adopted decision 16/13, entitled "The environmental situation in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories", requesting the Executive Director, among other things, to take measures and action in halting the environmental deterioration in the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories. The Council further requested the Executive Director to complete an up-to-date database of information on the environment in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories and to report the progress to the Council at its seventeenth session.

(i) Availability of environmental data

10. To implement this decision, a mission was sent to Egypt, the Syrian Arab Republic, Jordan and to PLO headquarters in Tunisia. Again, the mission was not able to visit the occupied Palestinian territories.

11. The objectives of the mission were to identify and compile information on the availability of existing environmental data for the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories and to provide guidelines for the establishment of an environmental information system.

12. A questionnaire was developed at UNEP headquarters and distributed to organizations and persons visited during the mission. This questionnaire was used to locate and identify the availability of environmental data. The mission succeeded in visiting 5 organizations in Egypt, 9 in the Syrian Arab Republic, 29 in Jordan and 3 departments at PLO headquarters at Tunis. The mission also visited headquarters of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) at Vienna. The organizations visited included governmental, non-governmental and United Nations organizations, as well as Palestinian sources.

(ii) Conclusion and recommendations

13. Once the data had been collected and analysed, it was concluded that environmental data for the occupied Palestinian territories were scattered among a large number of sources and in various formats, scales, geographic projection and different time-frames. However, data were sufficient for preliminary assessment of the state of the environment and the changes that had occurred since 1967.

14. The mission recommended that the establishment of environmental information systems for the occupied Palestinian territories was a necessary first step for the assessment of the environmental situation. The mission also recommended that an environmental information system be established at an institution in the occupied Palestinian territories, preferably in the West Bank with a sub-centre in Gaza, with technical, financial and training support provided to the institution operating the system. The establishment of a back-up system was also suggested.

15. The report of the mission and its findings and recommendations were discussed at the seventeenth session of the Governing Council of UNEP on 21 May 1993 (see A/48/25). The Governing Council expressed its concern over the deterioration of the environmental conditions in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories, and stressed the need for protecting their environment and their natural resources; welcomed the contents of the Executive Director's report, commended the cooperation extended by most of the parties concerned to the United Nations team in preparing the study, and requested the Executive Director to implement the recommendations contained in it. The Council requested the Executive Director to complete and update the report on the state of the environment in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories and to submit it to the Council at its eighteenth session; and also requested the Executive Director to provide the necessary technical assistance in Palestinian institutional and self-capacity-building in the field of the environment, including training in the relevant necessary fields.

(b) Activities implemented in cooperation with other United Nations organizations

(i) Training course on water supply, sanitation and health for environmental health officers working with Palestinian people

16. This project was funded by UNEP and implemented by the World Health Organization Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office (WHO/EMRO) through its Regional Centre for Environmental Health Activities (CEHA) at Amman. The 25-month project started in 1989 and ended in 1991. It facilitated training in the control of pollution and environmentally sound management of environmentally related diseases and aimed to control such diseases more effectively in refugee camps and settlements. Over the long term, this training is expected to improve drinking-water supplies, sanitation and food hygiene, especially with regard to controlling diarrhoea and other water-borne diseases among refugees. This project was implemented in close collaboration with UNRWA.

17. The output of this project included the training of 36 environmental health officers from the five UNRWA fields of operation in Jordan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Lebanon, the West Bank and Gaza. A training manual on water supply and sanitation for health in refugee camps was developed and was published and distributed in Arabic and English.

(ii) Promotion of Environmental Health and Manpower Development in Palestinian Refugee Camps

18. On the basis of further evaluations of UNRWA's needs, it was recommended that a comprehensive manpower development programme for all 100 environmental health officers of UNRWA should be carried out. A new project, that could be classified as phase II of the original project, is being implemented by WHO/CEHA and funded by UNEP. Its objective is to facilitate training in pollution control and sound management of vector-borne and parasitic diseases. The long-term objective is to improve drinking-water supply, sanitation and food hygiene, so as to contribute to the control of diarrhoeal and other water-borne diseases in Palestinian refugee camps.

19. The first stage of the workplan for the project is the training of senior sanitarians and area sanitation officers in two workshops. The second stage is to hold two sequential training sessions for field sanitation officers in each of the five UNRWA fields.

(c) Activities implemented in cooperation with other organizations

20. At its twentieth meeting, held at Istanbul in August 1991, the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers requested the Islamic Foundation for Science, Technology and Development (IFSTAD) to prepare and submit a report on the environmental problems of the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories to the Conference at its next meeting.

21. In September 1991, a joint programming session between the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and UNEP was held at Jeddah. In that meeting, OIC/IFSTAD and the UNEP Regional Office for West Asia were designated as focal points for the two organizations for activities relating to environmental

issues. One item in the memorandum of understanding between the two organizations calls for the preparation of a joint report on the environmental problems of the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories. The UNEP Regional Office recruited a consultant to gather all the information available and to prepare the draft report. Despite the scarcity of information available, the consultant was able to collect enough data for the joint OIC/IFSTAD and UNEP report, which will be submitted to the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers at its twenty-first meeting, in 1993.

22. UNEP participated in the multilateral discussions of the Middle East Peace Process - Working Group on Environment, which was held in Tokyo on 24 and 25 May 1993.

9. United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

(a) Introduction

23. In 1993, UNRWA is continuing to provide education, health, relief and social services and other humanitarian assistance to more than 2.7 million Palestine refugees in its five fields of operation, namely Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the occupied territory of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In addition, emergency measures are being carried out in Lebanon and the West Bank and Gaza Strip. A full account of UNRWA's activities can be found in the annual reports of the Commissioner-General to the General Assembly.

24. An indication of the level of UNRWA assistance to the Palestine refugees is provided by the budget figures. In the biennium 1992-1993, the Agency's regular budget is approximately \$572 million. The emergency measures in Lebanon and the occupied territory are planned to continue at a cost of \$40 million. In addition to the regular and emergency budgets, about \$40 million has been pledged or received since 1988 on the expanded programme of assistance referred to below. UNRWA employs approximately 20,000 staff, the vast majority of whom are themselves Palestine refugees, and is thus one of the largest employers in the Middle East.

25. The Israeli-ordered closure of the Gaza Strip on 30 March and the West Bank on 31 March 1993 had a large impact on UNRWA services and on overall socio-economic conditions of Palestinians in the occupied territory. The closure divided the occupied territory into four isolated regions: the northern West Bank, East Jerusalem, the southern West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Special permits were required for entry into Jerusalem and Israel, including travel between the West Bank and Gaza and within the West Bank itself, with no exceptions. This resulted in the severe disruption in the daily life of Palestinians, caused unemployment to rise to over 50 per cent and negatively affected commerce, medical care, education and access to services, including those of UNRWA.

(b) Education

26. The objective of the Agency's education programme is to provide, within the framework of the host countries' prescribed school curricula, general education

at the elementary and preparatory levels, teacher and higher education, and vocational and technical education for Palestine refugees, in accordance with their education needs, identity and cultural heritage. The programme operates with technical assistance from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). In the 1992/93 school year, the Agency has more than 392,000 pupils enrolled in 641 schools staffed by over 11,400 teachers and is providing training for more than 5,200 vocational and teacher trainees in its eight training centres.

27. Schools and training centres in the occupied territory are presently open but, throughout the intifadah, education has been severely disrupted by strikes, curfews, disturbances and closure orders imposed by the Israeli authorities. For example, UNRWA vocational training in the Gaza Strip has lost almost 50 per cent of teaching time in the 1992/93 school year, owing primarily to military-ordered closures. Since the Israeli authorities closed the occupied territory in late March, students from Gaza and the southern part of the West Bank have been unable to attend vocational and teacher training courses at UNRWA centres located north of Jerusalem. After many years of disruption, most schools in Lebanon are now operating relatively normally.

(c) Health

28. The UNRWA health programme comprises medical care and health protection and promotion delivered through 118 health centres and points, environmental health services in camps and distribution of food supplements to vulnerable women and children. The Agency's health protection and promotion activities focus particularly upon health care, including disease control and maternal and child health care. Mental health projects have been established in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Medical care also comprises a number of specialist clinics, including, inter alia, dental care, hypertension diabetes, respiratory diseases, cardiovascular diseases and obstetrics and gynaecology. A physiotherapy programme is run in conjunction with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in six clinics in Gaza and five in the West Bank.

29. In 1992, there were over 6 million patient visits to clinics Agency-wide. Hospitalization costs are covered through a reimbursement scheme whereby UNRWA covers the majority of costs; UNRWA also directly finances beds in non-governmental organization hospitals in the occupied territory and Lebanon. The health programme operates with technical assistance from the World Health Organization (WHO).

30. In addition to these services, the UNRWA health programme is focusing on the expansion of family planning in the context of maternal health, reducing doctor/patient ratios in health centres to a manageable level and the expansion of consultative mechanisms to enhance Palestinian participation in the establishment of health care priorities. As part of the latter, UNRWA is supporting a project effort to explore the needs of a future health insurance scheme for the occupied territory. A top priority in terms of external funding is given to environmental health and, in particular, to planning and first stage implementation of master plans for sewage disposal and safe water supply in the occupied territory and Lebanon. UNRWA is continuing with its project for constructing, equipping and commissioning a 232-bed hospital in the Gaza Strip



at a cost of \$35 million, \$20 million of which represents capital cost and \$15 million operating costs for the first three years.

(d) Relief and social services

31. The relief and social services programme provides support to those Palestine refugees who suffer the greatest socio-economic disadvantages and its purpose is to facilitate their self-reliance. The programme consists of assistance to special hardship cases, social case work, self-support projects and related skill training, women's programmes, rehabilitation of the disabled and assistance to refugees in emergency situations.

32. These activities are continuing in 1993. The ongoing deterioration of the socio-economic situation in the UNRWA area of operations is putting increasing pressure on the special hardship programme. As at March 1993, 180,000 persons, or about 7 per cent of the Palestine refugee population Agency-wide, were registered as special hardship cases. Emphasis continues to be placed on setting up small group enterprises to provide employment, especially for women from special hardship families and the disabled. The community-based rehabilitation programme for the disabled has further expanded, particularly in the occupied territory, where projects are being developed aimed at the vocational rehabilitation of the disabled, in particular former bread-winners injured during the intifadah. The number of women's programme centres in all fields has increased to 68.

(e) Extraordinary measures

33. In response to the additional needs created by the intifadah and the Israeli countermeasures, UNRWA introduced a programme of extraordinary measures, which began in early 1988 and has continued until the present. The large number of casualties resulting from the intifadah has led to a considerable expansion of the emergency medical programme. These measures are continuing in 1993, with nine clinics open 24 hours a day and five clinics open in two shifts in the Gaza Strip, while a number of clinics also run double shifts in the West Bank. Additional medical supplies and equipment, including ambulances for the evacuation of casualties, have been purchased and the payment of hospital costs and subsidies has been increased.

34. Welfare services have been expanded to assist the families of those killed, disabled or detained and to cope with the far-reaching socio-economic effects of the intifadah. Additional food is being provided to needy people in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and needy families have received cash grants. The Israeli-ordered closure of the occupied territory in late March 1993 led to a sharp increase in unemployment and socio-economic hardship. UNRWA responded to the new and urgent needs created by the closure with emergency food distribution to 120,000 families in the Gaza Strip and 39,000 in the West Bank.

35. An important element of the Agency's extraordinary measures in the occupied territory is the programme of general assistance and protection. The major component of this programme is the placing of 12 international staff members in the West Bank and 9 in the Gaza Strip as refugee affairs officers. These staff members facilitate Agency operation in the difficult prevailing circumstances and assist the refugee population in their day-to-day life. The refugee affairs

officers help by their presence to lower tensions, especially during confrontations with the security forces, and to prevent maltreatment of the refugees, in particular vulnerable groups such as women and children.

36. The situation prevailing in Lebanon has required the Agency to carry out programmes of emergency and extraordinary measures for a number of years. In 1993, while the overall situation continues to improve, many of these measures are still needed by Palestine refugees and include, *inter alia*, distribution of foodstuffs, cash assistance to the most needy and assistance to displaced persons.

(f) Expanded programme of assistance

37. In 1988, UNRWA launched an expanded programme of assistance, consisting of approximately 200 projects to improve living conditions and infrastructure in the camps in the occupied territory. The programme was subsequently extended to the Agency's other fields. Approximately \$40 million had been received or pledged by early 1993 of a target amount of \$65 million. A high priority in the expanded programme of assistance is to ensure that refugees living in the 27 camps of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip have decent shelter and a sanitary environment. Accordingly, substantial efforts are being made in repairing and constructing refugee shelters and in upgrading the standards of rehabilitation. The Agency has also continued to improve camp infrastructure and primary health care facilities, including construction and equipment of additional health centres, internal sewage systems and integration of camp water and sewage schemes into municipal and regional systems. In early 1993, a study was completed on strategic actions for development of the environmental health sector in the Gaza Strip.

38. Following the war in the Persian Gulf, as part of its efforts to relieve unemployment and the stagnant economy of the occupied territory and assist Palestinians suffering economic dislocation in Jordan and Lebanon, UNRWA implemented a new income-generating and job-creation scheme through the establishment of revolving loan funds. Individuals as well as cooperatives, partnerships and other types of groups are eligible to apply for loans. In the Gaza Strip, where the programme was first implemented, loans totalling more than \$1.9 million have been disbursed; in the West Bank, over \$560,000 of loans has been approved. In Lebanon, a total of \$82,000 and in Jordan \$158,000 in loans has been disbursed.

10. World Food Programme

39. Regarding the provision of food assistance to the Palestinian people, WFP supported a food-aided project for vulnerable groups and hospital patients worth about \$1 million, which terminated in April 1992. Since then WFP has been in contact with both UNDP, Jerusalem and the Israeli authorities for an extension of the project. But despite those efforts, the Israeli Civil Administration has not yet agreed and WFP has been unable to deliver food assistance in the occupied Palestinian territories since April 1992.

40. However, following the recent contacts among WFP senior staff, the Special Representative of the UNDP Administrator and the Palestinian authorities on the

occasion of a seminar on assistance to the Palestinian people, which took place at the end of April 1993 at UNESCO headquarters in Paris, the need for urgent humanitarian food assistance for the population in the Gaza Strip, in particular, was raised in the light of the severe disruption of Palestinian economic life following the Israeli closure of the borders in March. A WFP mission is being fielded to ascertain these needs, pending final concurrence of the Israeli Civil Administration, through UNDP, to provide further WFP food assistance.

## B. Specialized agencies

### 4. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

41. At its twenty-sixth session in November 1991, the FAO Conference reviewed the recommendations of the FAO mission fielded to the occupied Palestinian territory from 23 August to 6 September 1991 and invited the Director-General to formulate projects and activities to implement the recommendations of the mission and the conclusions of the Conference.

42. In response to that request, FAO and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) fielded a joint project identification/formulation mission to the occupied territory, from 10 February to 2 March 1993, in order to prepare a concise plan of action for the rehabilitation of the agricultural sector, to make recommendations for the development of the institutional structure for servicing the agricultural sector and to prepare priority project documents.

43. In the political climate obtaining in the occupied territory and, given the weakness of the agricultural institutions, particularly the absence of coordinated sectoral planning, as well as the risk involved in new investments, the mission concluded that no firm course of action for agricultural rehabilitation could be realistically recommended.

44. The mission was nevertheless able to identify priority issues central to the rehabilitation process for which some immediate action was required. These included, inter alia, the need for land reclamation in the West Bank, the need for rehabilitation of village roads, water resources development, livestock development, agricultural planning, agricultural marketing and applied research and extension.

45. Draft project documents for those areas have been prepared with a view to submission by ESCWA to potential donors for purposes of resource mobilization.

### 5. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

#### (a) United Nations European Seminar on Assistance to the Palestinian People

46. In response to the request addressed to him by the Chairman of the Committee on the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, the Director-General agreed to host the above-mentioned seminar, organized by the Committee, at UNESCO headquarters from 26 to 29 April 1993. UNESCO participated in the

work of the seminar and, inter alia, submitted a document on its activities on behalf of the Palestinian people.

(b) UNESCO action

47. In accordance with decision 4.3.1 adopted by the Executive Board at its one hundred and thirty-ninth session, the Director-General on 22 January 1993 addressed a circular letter to member States, international organizations and various sources of funding asking them for voluntary contributions to cover the deficit in the operating budgets of the Palestinian universities resulting from the prolonged closure of those institutions and the current situation. The scope of that appeal was as broad as those launched by the Director-General on 27 April 1988 and 8 December 1986 requesting that scholarships should be granted to students in the occupied territories and that of 7 September 1990 requesting that research and training fellowships should be awarded to Palestinian assistant lecturers in various scientific and technical fields. The Director-General also concluded a cooperation agreement with the PEACE (Palestinian European Academic Co-operation in Europe) programme, following which UNESCO granted this programme a subsidy of \$16,000 in December 1992. In addition, under the Participation Programme for 1992-1993, Palestine received financial assistance amounting, in February 1993, to \$93,000.

6. World Health Organization

(a) General considerations

48. As a result of a number of World Health Assembly resolutions, a special technical support programme to improve the health conditions of the Palestinian people was initiated in January 1990. It aims at providing the Palestinians with the means of attaining a level of health that would permit them to lead a healthier and more productive life. While real and lasting peace requires a political solution, it is still important for WHO to be fully engaged in the effort to attain health for all in the area, contributing to and promoting the socio-economic development that is an important element in assuring a peaceful settlement of the Palestine question.

49. Through the opportunity provided by the Middle East Peace Conference and subsequent events, it is important to anticipate the effect the peace process may have on the Palestinian people and their health in future. It is now time to plan ahead, preparing the Palestinians to build up their health system.

50. In this spirit, WHO launched an appeal to the international donor community in October 1992, proposing an initial plan for two years. It advocated a three-pronged approach to assist the establishment and implementation of measures for assumption of responsibility for health services by a higher council for health. Through the Council, assistance to Palestinian health institutions in the occupied Arab territories would be provided and managerial and financial problems that face these institutions would be tackled. Finally, the appeal aimed at promoting regional health cooperation once the political climate so permitted.

51. Improvement of health care and health status in the occupied Arab territories is essential in view of the precarious health conditions prevailing there, which continue to give serious cause for concern. The realities of the situation, and the effects of the intifadah and countermeasures, have produced extraordinary economic and social conditions that seriously affect many aspects of people's lives. The effect of a quarter century of conflict, displacement and occupation, and the repercussions of the Gulf crisis have combined to make the health conditions deteriorate more rapidly in the past two years than at any time since the matter was brought to the attention of the World Health Assembly. The poor conditions are likely to continue if the will to tackle the problem does not prevail.

(b) Special technical support programme

52. During the period under review the WHO special technical support programme to improve the health conditions of the Palestinian people provided the support described below. As reported to the forty-fifth World Health Assembly, the steering committees of the two collaborating centres in Ramallah were to close the centres down as at 31 December 1991; WHO continued to cooperate with the Gaza centre through funding from the special technical support programme. It is in the process of finalizing two studies: the first on strengthening health education for pregnant women, the second on hospital discharge system in operation in the Gaza Strip.

53. WHO cooperated with the Union of Palestinian Medical Relief Committees in completing a study of rural health centres and services in the occupied Arab territories. The purpose of this study is to locate the infrastructure, analyse the services it offers and establish how this infrastructure could form the backbone of a cohesive primary health care system.

54. Work financed by WHO to remodel a maternity wing in the Red Crescent Society hospital in Jerusalem was completed late in 1992, enabling the hospital to install a lift and remodel a building for use in providing care services for mothers and children in East Jerusalem.

55. WHO transferred to UNRWA responsibility for the mental health programme established by the special technical programme in 1991 to cope with increased trauma in children and their mothers. Surveys indicated an increase in the incidence of psychiatric illnesses in this population group due to intifadah-related arrests and detention of young people and their parents. While the impact is difficult to quantify scientifically at present, the mental health programme offers treatment to alleviate the harrowing effect of trauma related to imprisonment and arrest or deportation of a family member in children or in mothers who have to withstand the stress of caring for their families in such a difficult environment.

56. The programme will finance a one-year study in collaboration with the Palestinian Research Centre in Jerusalem aimed at achieving a better accounting system for hospitalization costs by analysing costs per bed, which would constitute a reliable basis of information, as recommended by the two international consultants contracted by UNRWA to study the possibilities for starting a health insurance scheme in the occupied Arab territories.

57. A protocol for a brucellosis survey in humans and animals is being established with the WHO Veterinary Public Health Unit to define the extent of the brucellosis problem in humans and animals, assess the impact of the disease on the economy, conduct a cost-benefit analysis for brucellosis control, assess the current reporting systems on zoonoses in humans and animals and propose a model for effective surveillance. It is hoped that the financing of the survey can be assured. It will draw on the expertise of local veterinary officers and short-term consultants from the Veterinary Public Health Unit and the Division of Field Epidemiology in the Centers for Disease Control, Atlanta, Georgia, United States of America.

58. The WHO Health Coordinator in the occupied Arab territories has maintained and further developed cooperation with international and non-governmental organizations operating in the territories. Discussions were maintained with Palestinian scientists and physicians, local health department officials, and representatives of the Commission of the European Communities, the World Bank and other bodies. Cooperation mainly focused on the development of joint action and the exploring of possible sources of financial support for the special technical support programme.

59. In response to resolution WHA45.26 and the historic opportunity offered by the negotiations that are now under way for a peaceful settlement in the Middle East, WHO worked with Harvard University's Institute for Social and Economic Policy in the Middle East in the formulation of strategies for the development of plans to enhance the participation of the Palestinians during the transition period in deciding on measures affecting their health and for the promotion of broader regional cooperation in health matters once the political circumstances make it possible.

60. Work in the implementation of the strategies is not proceeding further, owing to lack of funds from the international donor community. During the period under review two donations were received, totalling some \$230,000, from Italy and Belgium in response to an appeal for \$3.5 million. The cost of 1992 operations amounted to approximately \$400,000.

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REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL  
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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL  
Substantive session of 1994  
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SOCIAL, HUMANITARIAN AND  
HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS:  
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
DECLARATION ON THE  
GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE  
TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND  
PEOPLES BY THE  
SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND  
THE INTERNATIONAL  
INSTITUTIONS ASSOCIATED  
WITH THE UNITED NATIONS

Assistance to the Palestinian people

Report of the Secretary-General

1. On 21 December 1993, the General Assembly adopted resolution 48/213, entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian People", in which it, inter alia, took note of the report of the Secretary-General; expressed its appreciation to him for his rapid response and efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people; expressed its appreciation to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people; welcomed the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993; urged Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people in order to assist in the development of the West Bank and Gaza, and to do so in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and

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through official Palestinian institutions; considered that an active United Nations role in assisting in the implementation of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements, including its annexes and agreed minutes (A/48/486-S/26560, annex), could make a positive contribution; called upon relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people, and to improve coordination through an appropriate mechanism under the auspices of the Secretary-General; urged Member States to open their markets to exports from the West Bank and Gaza on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules; suggested the convening in 1993/94, under the appropriate United Nations auspices, of a seminar on Palestinian trade and investment needs in the light of the new developments; requested the Secretary-General to ensure the coordinated work of the United Nations system for an adequate response to the needs of the Palestinian people and to mobilize financial, technical, economic and other assistance; and also requested him to submit a report to the Assembly at its forty-ninth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the resolution, containing: (a) an assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people; and (b) an assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them.

2. Deeply conscious of the new challenges to the United Nations resulting from the mutual recognition between the Government of the State of Israel and the PLO and the signing by them of the Declaration of Principles on 13 September 1993, and with a view to implementing the mandate entrusted to him in resolution 48/213, the Secretary-General has taken a number of steps aimed at enhancing economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people.

3. In early September 1993, when news of the breakthrough in Israeli-Palestinian negotiations became public, the Secretary-General established a high-level task force to identify new activities and projects that could be rapidly implemented by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the United Nations agencies with an established presence in the occupied territories. These activities would be carried out in addition to the agencies' regular programmes and would be launched as soon as funding was secured. The report of the task force, which identified immediate additional needs for the Palestinian people, assessed at \$138 million, was circulated at the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened by the United States and the Russian Federation as co-sponsors of the peace process, at Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993. Conference participants acknowledged that, in view of its extensive operations in the area, the United Nations would be an effective channel for such assistance, especially in the short-term. In the nine months since the Conference, UNRWA and UNDP have received donor commitments of \$86 and \$42 million, respectively, representing more than 90 per cent of the funds requested.

4. In addition to implementing projects that would have an immediate impact on the economy of the West Bank and Gaza, thereby generating new employment, with a resulting multiplier effect, the Secretary-General has been committed to the strengthening of Palestinian institutions, in particular those which will



support the Palestinian Authority. On 14 September 1993, the day after the signing of the Declaration of Principles, the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the PLO, Mr. Yasser Arafat, in a meeting with the Secretary-General, requested United Nations technical assistance in a variety of sectors, in particular for building the Palestinian administration to be entrusted with the tasks of self-government. He subsequently requested, in a letter to the Secretary-General dated 10 December 1993, United Nations assistance in training the Palestinian police force envisaged in the Declaration of Principles.

5. In response to those requests, the Secretary-General dispatched, in October 1993, a technical mission to Tunis and the occupied territories, for consultations with the Palestinian leadership. The mission also met with senior officials in Egypt, Jordan and Israel. The parties welcomed the intention of the Secretary-General to ensure a unified and coherent approach in the provision of economic, social and other assistance in the occupied territories. The mission also met with representatives of the United Nations agencies and programmes in the West Bank and Gaza, as well as the World Bank team that was visiting the area at the time. In the light of the findings of the mission, the Secretary-General was persuaded of the need to appoint a high-level personality who would serve as a focal point for all United Nations economic, social and other assistance to the Palestinians in the occupied territories.

6. In that connection, the Secretary-General followed closely the negotiations during the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly on the draft resolution on assistance to the Palestinian people, which, for the first time, was adopted by consensus. Paragraphs 7 and 10 of resolution 48/213, which emphasize the need for coordinated work by the programmes and agencies of the United Nations system, strengthened his conviction that, given the complexity and sensitivity of the situation in the region and the multiplicity of actors outside the United Nations system that would be involved during the transitional phase, it would be necessary to establish a specific mechanism to ensure effective coordination and intensification of United Nations assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their immediate and longer-term needs.

7. On 28 May 1994, the Secretary-General announced the appointment of Ambassador Terje Roed Larsen of Norway as Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories. The announcement was made within weeks of the 4 May signing at Cairo by Israel and the PLO of the agreement on Gaza and Jericho, which represents the first phase of implementation of the Declaration of Principles. A copy of the agreement, which is over 200 pages long, was officially conveyed to the Secretary-General on 27 May 1994 and is being issued as part of an official document under the symbol A/49/180-S/1994/727.

8. Mr. Larsen made an initial visit to the occupied territories from 15 to 23 June, during which he met representatives of the Palestinian Authority in Gaza and Jericho, as well as Palestinian representatives from throughout the occupied territories, in a meeting at Orient House in East Jerusalem. During his stay, he also met with the Foreign Minister of Israel, Mr. Shimon Peres, and senior officials in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The visit provided an opportunity for extensive field visits to United Nations projects throughout the West Bank and Gaza, and consultations with local representatives of UNRWA, UNDP,

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UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO). Following his stay in the occupied territories, Mr. Larsen visited Tunis, where he met Chairman Arafat and other senior PLO officials.

9. On 29 June 1994, the Secretary-General convened an inter-agency meeting of 17 organizations of the United Nations system to discuss their current or prospective assistance to the Palestinian people and to lay the groundwork for a mode of operations under the overall guidance of the Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories. Participants in the meeting agreed on the need for an integrated and coherent approach in providing United Nations economic, social and other assistance in the occupied territories. The meeting is being followed up by bilateral contacts between the Special Coordinator and the heads of relevant United Nations programmes and specialized agencies, particularly those which, for the first time, are about to launch programmes in the area.

10. With respect to Chairman Arafat's request for United Nations assistance in training the Palestinian police force, the Secretariat, together with representatives of France, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, have set up a training programme for future instructors of the police force. The programme was submitted to the PLO in May 1994. The Special Coordinator received a positive response regarding the package during his meeting with Chairman Arafat at Tunis on 24 June.

11. As the Special Coordinator has just begun to undertake his new functions and will establish residence in the occupied territories only in August, it has not yet been possible for him to assess the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people, to assess the needs still unmet and to make specific proposals for responding effectively to them, as called for in paragraph 11 of resolution 48/213. A report on the matter will be submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session during the autumn.

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NATIONS, INCLUDING SPECIAL  
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ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUAL  
COUNTRIES OR REGIONS

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL  
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SOCIAL, HUMANITARIAN AND  
HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS:  
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
DECLARATION ON THE  
GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE  
TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND  
PEOPLES BY THE  
SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND  
THE INTERNATIONAL  
INSTITUTIONS ASSOCIATED  
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Assistance to the Palestinian people

Report of the Secretary-General

Corrigendum

The agenda items of the document should read as above.

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ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES  
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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL  
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SOCIAL, HUMANITARIAN AND HUMAN  
RIGHTS QUESTIONS: REPORTS  
OF SUBSIDIARY BODIES,  
CONFERENCES AND RELATED  
QUESTIONS: IMPLEMENTATION  
OF THE DECLARATION ON THE  
GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO  
COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND  
PEOPLES BY THE SPECIALIZED  
AGENCIES AND THE  
INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS  
ASSOCIATED WITH THE  
UNITED NATIONS

Assistance to the Palestinian people

Report of the Secretary-General

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\*\* E/1995/100.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. On 20 December 1994, the General Assembly adopted resolution 49/21 N, entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian People", in which it, inter alia, stressed the importance of the appointment of the Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories; urged Member States and agencies of the United Nations system to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people to assist in the development of the West Bank and Gaza, with emphasis on national execution and capacity-building and to do so in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions; called upon the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs; and requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to the Assembly on the implementation of the resolution, containing: (a) an assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people; and (b) an assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them.

2. Ambassador Terje Rod Larsen of Norway was appointed Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories in June 1994. In his previous report on assistance to the Palestinian people (A/49/263-E/1994/112 and Corr.1), the Secretary-General provided an overview of the initial activities of the Special Coordinator. The present report covers the period from August 1994, when the Special Coordinator established residence in the occupied territories, through June 1995.

3. In order to effect visible and immediate improvements in the lives of the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the Special Coordinator proceeded simultaneously on four fronts: supporting ongoing activities of the United Nations in the occupied territories; facilitating development of public works projects to provide immediate employment opportunities and bring visible changes to the Gaza Strip; establishing a coordination mechanism on the ground to ensure the effective disbursement of donor pledges made at the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, held in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993; and coordinating training and other assistance for the incoming Palestinian police force.

4. The efforts of the Special Coordinator were undertaken consistent with the recommendations of the high-level United Nations task force on social and economic development of the Gaza Strip and Jericho formed by the Secretary-General in September 1993, prior to the signing by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements (see A/48/486-S/26560). This task force had recommended that the ongoing activities of United Nations agencies in the occupied territories, implemented primarily by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), be fully supported and extended. These activities, mainly covering health and environmental health, education, social services, institution-building and support to the private sector, represented over one half of all public sector

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expenditure in the Gaza Strip and about one third of it in the West Bank. Ensuring continuity and further development of these services was a key factor in supporting social stability in the occupied territory at a time of rapid political change. The second main recommendation of the task force was that additional activities should be undertaken to improve immediately the existing basic and social services infrastructure in order to make tangible improvements in the daily lives of the Palestinian people, provide much-needed employment opportunities in the implementation phase and help in the development of essential infrastructure in support of the incoming Palestinian Authority.

## II. ESTABLISHMENT OF A COORDINATION MECHANISM

5. On 29 and 30 November 1994, the main donor-led body overseeing the assistance effort, the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, met at Brussels. At the suggestion of the United Nations, the Committee decided to devolve certain aspects of the donor coordination process to the level of representatives in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. For that purpose, the Committee established a Local Aid Coordination Committee, to be composed of the Palestinian Authority and all donors to the Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The co-chairs of the Local Aid Coordination Committee are Norway, in its capacity as Chair of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator and the World Bank. The latter two act as joint secretariat to the Local Aid Coordination Committee. The Local Aid Coordination Committee reports to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee.

6. The Local Aid Coordination Committee decided in December 1994 to establish 12 sectoral subcommittees, known as sectoral working groups, to focus donor assistance to the Palestinians consistent with the priorities set by the Palestinian Authority, with input from the United Nations and the World Bank. Each sectoral working group is composed of all donors interested in that particular sector, with one donor representative as shepherd of the committee; representatives of relevant Palestinian Authority ministries, as gavel holders; and the World Bank and/or the United Nations as secretariat for each group. The 12 subcommittees cover agriculture, education, creation of employment, environment, health, infrastructure and housing, institution-building, police, private sector, public finance, tourism and transport and communications. The Special Coordinator delegated secretariat responsibilities to United Nations agencies with an established presence on the ground, namely, UNDP, UNICEF, UNRWA, and the World Health Organization (WHO). The Office of the Special Coordinator also assumed secretariat responsibilities.

7. By way of example, the sectoral working group on employment generation, with Sweden as shepherd, the Palestinian Authority as gavel holder and UNDP as secretariat, had raised as of March 1995 over \$25 million for projects to be implemented by the Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction, UNDP and UNRWA. Some 5,000 jobs were created through the implementation of these projects. In April 1995, the Special Coordinator and the Government of Sweden jointly undertook fund-raising efforts to finance additional projects developed under the auspices of the sectoral working group on employment generation. The other 11 sectoral working groups were working on a similar basis, identifying priorities with the Palestinian Authority,

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discussing project proposals with the main implementing agencies (the Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction, United Nations agencies and programmes and the World Bank) and identifying possible sources of funding.

8. Parallel to the establishment of the donor coordination structures, the Special Coordinator undertook efforts to sharpen the focus of United Nations assistance to the Palestinian people in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. At an inter-agency meeting convened by him in Gaza in December 1994, attended by over 20 agencies and programmes of the United Nations, it was decided to form six priority sector groups covering the main areas of United Nations activities on the ground. These priority sector groups cover education, employment generation, health, infrastructure and housing, institution-building and the private sector. Each priority sector group is composed of all United Nations organizations working in or intending to work in that sector in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, with one United Nations agency as focal point for the United Nations system in that sector. The International Labour Organization (ILO), UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF and WHO assumed focal point responsibilities.

9. The aim of the priority sector groups is to achieve a coordinated, integrated and targeted approach to United Nations assistance to the Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, as called for by the Secretary-General. The focal points play a lead role in the development of United Nations sectoral strategies and programmes of action; assist United Nations organizations not yet operational by providing information on Palestinian priorities and donor interests; and inform Palestinian institutions and donors of the capacities within the United Nations family. Under the umbrella of the priority sector groups, all United Nations organizations with an interest in a particular sector can find a framework for inclusion in the common development assistance effort. By organizing United Nations agencies according to their sectoral interests, greater efficiency in planning and output can be achieved and duplication avoided.

10. The United Nations focal point for a priority sector group generally serves also as the secretariat for the corresponding sectoral working group (under the Local Aid Coordination Committee) and thus ensures that United Nations organizations active in a particular sector can keep abreast, through the focal point, of the priorities of relevant Palestinian Authority ministries and representatives, as well as of donor funding priorities and concerns.

11. In late April 1995, the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee convened a meeting in Paris against a backdrop of growing financial difficulties for the Palestinian Authority, which faced a projected budget deficit of \$136 million. Within the framework of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, on 27 April 1995, the Palestinian Authority, the Government of Israel and the Chair of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, on behalf of the donors, concluded a Tripartite Plan of Action that elaborated commitments and responsibilities that each party undertook to fulfil in connection with the donor effort to bridge the budget deficit.

12. At the meeting in Paris, the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee re-established the Joint Liaison Committee (an earlier version of this body had been unable to convene), which provides a forum in which to discuss with the Palestinian



Authority economic policy and practical matters related to donor assistance. It is comprised of the Palestinian Authority as gavel holder; Norway, in its capacity as Chair of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, as shepherd; the United Nations and the World Bank as joint secretariat; the United States of America and the European Union. Japan was also asked to take part in the meetings. In addition to taking up bilateral issues relating to donor assistance, the Joint Liaison Committee will discuss progress in the implementation of the Tripartite Plan of Action, with the participation of representatives of Israel, who will be invited especially for this purpose. The Joint Liaison Committee first met on 15 May 1995. At the second meeting of the Joint Liaison Committee, on 18 May 1995, at the suggestion of the United Nations, it was decided to form a Task Force on Project Implementation (to be comprised of the Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction as gavel holder, the United States and the European Commission as co-shepherds, the Office of the Special Coordinator as secretariat, as well as the World Bank, UNDP and UNRWA), which will examine technical and other obstacles to timely implementation of projects and seek solutions for addressing such obstacles. The Task Force reports to the Joint Liaison Committee, which will discuss obstacles with the appropriate party, whether the Palestinian Authority, the Government of Israel, the donors or the implementing agencies.

13. The Special Coordinator convened a second inter-agency meeting in Gaza in June 1995 to examine the evolving role of the United Nations in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and to review progress made in implementing the United Nations coordination mechanisms that had been agreed upon at the first inter-agency meeting in December 1994. A central objective of the meeting was to discuss draft sectoral strategy papers under preparation by the priority sector focal points in consultation with interested United Nations organizations. These sectoral papers and accompanying project documents will form the core of the United Nations coordinated, targeted and unified strategy for expanding its ongoing programmes and undertaking new initiatives for the benefit of the Palestinian Authority and the Palestinian people in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in the coming period. More than 20 agencies and programmes of the United Nations system participated.

14. The sectoral strategy papers and accompanying project documents will provide the basis for the fund-raising by the United Nations Special Coordinator, on behalf of and in coordination with implementing agencies. There will be an opportunity for presenting these targeted and unified strategies to donors in the Consultative Group chaired by the World Bank, to take place later in the summer of 1995. Over the past 12 months, the World Bank and the Office of the Special Coordinator have developed a strong partnership on the ground, exemplified by frequent consultations, and the joint secretariat and co-chair functions shared by them in the context of the Local Aid Coordination Committee and the Joint Liaison Committee. The respective roles of the World Bank and the United Nations have, through close coordination and regular exchange of information, developed in a complementary fashion. This relationship, with strong support from donor representatives, has helped to focus the donor-led coordination effort and avoid duplication of work and has allowed for a more coordinated approach between the donors, implementing agencies and the Palestinian Authority.

III. ASSISTANCE TO THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE: ONGOING PROGRAMMES,  
UNMET NEEDS AND PROPOSALS FOR ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE

15. After consultations with the programmes and agencies of the United Nations system active in the area (a list of which appears in the annex to the present report), the Special Coordinator prepared the following update on United Nations assistance received by the Palestinian people in the occupied territories, as well as an analysis of needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them.

A. United Nations assistance in infrastructure

16. The UNDP Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People is oriented towards water supply, sanitation, agriculture, industry and housing. Since the inception of the Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People, approximately 70 per cent of the UNDP budget has been expended in these five areas. UNDP infrastructure projects are usually an integrated package of technical assistance, training and capital assistance, with capital assistance amounting to 80 per cent of UNDP budget expenditures. Projects are funded through the UNDP central budget and joint funding from donors.

17. UNDP has implemented projects targeted at improving water infrastructure, providing enhanced service to over 200,000 people in 40 villages and a number of towns in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The projects have included the construction of main lines, water networks and reservoirs, the rehabilitation of springs and wells and the reconstruction of irrigation channels. In addition, UNDP has been working with municipalities, providing technical and management support to municipal water departments through hands-on training to operate and maintain water supply and distribution systems, as well as training on management and cost recovery systems. In 1994, UNDP established the Water Resources Action Programme, with a mandate to work towards developing and enhancing the capacity of the recently established Water Authority to manage, assess and regulate water resources effectively.

18. In 1987, UNDP undertook the implementation of a complete sewage collection, treatment and disposal scheme for the northern Gaza Strip, including the reconstruction and upgrading of a treatment plant and related infrastructure for the municipality of Gaza; a sewage collection network with five pumping stations for Jabalia refugee camp; a sewage collection and disposal system for Beit Hanoun Town; a similar sewage system in the non-sewered area around the Tal-Ezza'tar refugee camp and the upgrading and proper operation of the main sewage treatment plant at Beit Lahia.

19. In the West Bank, UNDP constructed a sewage collection network in Balata refugee camp in Nablus. UNDP is presently working on the preparation of a sewage master plan for the middle region of the West Bank, covering 2 main cities and over 30 localities. Similarly, a project is due to start in the city of Hebron which will focus on the formulation of a conceptual master plan for sewerage.

20. UNDP has constructed 223 classrooms in various locations in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, serving over 9,000 female and male students. A school complex in the city of Jericho will soon be completed, addressing the city's need for school space for the next five years. UNDP, in coordination with the cooperative representing Gaza fishermen, constructed 14 fish retail stores, an administration building for the cooperative, an ice block factory and a refrigeration facility. In 1993, UNDP implemented a programme to encourage the use of modern irrigation techniques by Palestinian farmers. In the northern region of the Gaza Strip, UNDP constructed a packing and grading house for the Beit Lahia agricultural cooperative and installed automated equipment for packing and grading tomatoes and potatoes. UNDP has initiated a project to renovate two Palestinian intermediate-level agricultural training schools at Al-Aroob in Hebron and Beit Hanoun in Gaza.

21. UNDP is reconstructing hospitals in the West Bank cities of Hebron, Beit-Jala and Nablus. In 1993, UNDP completed the construction of a new east wing at Hebron Princess Alia Hospital, which serves as an outpatient clinic, and renovated an additional one third of the hospital. In early 1994, UNDP began construction to upgrade facilities at Beit-Jala Hospital. Also in 1994, UNDP initiated construction activities for expanding the Women's Union Hospital of Nablus. The proposed two-storey annex will house three operating theatres, including services and intensive care units.

22. In the West Bank, UNDP implemented construction of a complex of 86 stores and a cold storage facility at the Nablus municipal vegetable wholesale market, with built-in cost recovery mechanisms to ensure future maintenance. In Gaza, in 1994, UNDP completed a 20-ton-per-hour citrus juice factory. The plant consumes about 30 per cent of the Gaza citrus crop per annum (45,000 tons) and produces fresh juice, juice concentrate and essential oils.

23. UNDP is presently implementing a housing project in Beit Hanoun, in the Gaza Strip, which will provide 256 fully serviced housing units for families of the Palestinian police force with public utilities. In addition, UNDP has recently funded a physical planning study throughout the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to ascertain disparities in infrastructure requirements. The study will identify investment opportunities in agriculture and local infrastructure, including roads and transport, markets and storage facilities, water supply and sanitation, solid waste collection and disposal, housing, education and health, and power supply.

24. UNRWA has provided basic infrastructure facilities for over 450,000 Palestinian refugees residing in refugee camps throughout the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. During its 45 years of operation in the West Bank and Gaza, UNRWA has undertaken a number of infrastructure projects in order to improve various facilities, including schools, health clinics, shelters, roadways, water supply and sanitation networks.

25. A significant proportion of the funds required for routine upgrading of infrastructure has been financed through UNRWA's General Fund. In 1988, UNRWA launched its Expanded Programme of Assistance in order to solicit donor funding for more substantial infrastructural projects in all sectors. Owing to the deplorable state of environmental health, special priority was given to sewage

and drainage projects in Gaza, especially in Beach Camp and the municipality of Gaza. In October 1993, UNRWA launched its Peace Implementation Programme, targeted at infrastructural projects in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, of which most projects are either completed or under implementation. The second phase of the Peace Implementation Programme was launched in November 1994. Under the first phase, funds have been received for environmental health projects in several of the camps in the West Bank and Gaza, including projects to improve sewerage, storm-water drainage and solid waste disposal. UNRWA is presently negotiating the implementation of sewerage and storm-water drainage projects in the Beach Camp-Sheikh Radwan area.

26. Under the first phase of the Peace Implementation Programme, UNRWA has already implemented some \$30 million worth of projects to upgrade educational infrastructure. In Gaza alone, UNRWA has constructed and equipped 24 new schools and has added specialized rooms and extra classrooms to a range of existing schools. In the West Bank, nine schools have been upgraded and an additional nine schools are currently under construction. Under the second phase of the Programme, UNRWA has so far been able to generate funds to permit the construction of one additional school as well as 42 additional classrooms in Gaza. Additional projects have been designed and are awaiting funding.

27. Under the first phase of the Peace Implementation Programme, UNRWA is currently implementing \$9 million worth of projects in the health sectors, including construction of a college of nursing, a dental clinic at Maghazi refugee camp and two health centres at Deir el-Balah and Khan Younis. In the West Bank, new health centres/clinics are being constructed in Biddo, Nablus, Ein Arik, Beit Our, Ya'bad and Ramadin. In addition, UNRWA is currently in the final stages of constructing and equipping a new 230-bed hospital in Khan Younis, which should be operational in early 1996.

28. Under the first phase of the Peace Implementation Programme, UNRWA has accorded a special priority to rehabilitating the shelters of those refugees who are worst off, particularly those families without an adult male breadwinner, UNRWA's special hardship cases. Within the first phase of the Programme, \$20.8 million has been raised for this purpose and within the second phase an additional \$6 million has been raised. Under this programme, a total of 3,626 shelters will be rehabilitated and, in Gaza, an additional 2,078 shelters will be re-roofed. Rehabilitation of over 2,400 shelters is now completed and work is under way on the remaining shelters.

29. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) fielded a mission to the occupied territories in April 1995 to assess the needs of Palestinian civil aviation. The ICAO mission, in cooperation with the Palestinian Civil Aviation Authority, identified the need for the construction of an airport in the Gaza Strip and one in Jericho, as well as the need for a civil aviation master plan.

#### 1. Main development needs

30. Infrastructure development is intimately related to the development of other sectors. Roads, water and sanitation, electricity and communication systems, hospitals and schools are the foundations of economic and social

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activities crucial to the development of education, health care, industry, business and agriculture.

31. Water infrastructure in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip is inadequate and deteriorating. Large volumes of water go unaccounted for owing to extensive leakage, incorrect metering and theft. Wells require upgrading, and supply networks should be rehabilitated. Institutional constraints also affect the delivery of water services. Small municipalities and village councils have limited human and financial resources, and, as a result, supply, management and planning are handicapped. The result is ineffective operation and maintenance and ad hoc investment, planning and execution. Efficient water preservation and distribution systems should be put in place. Greater focus should be placed on building Palestinian capacity in water resource planning and management (water policy, legislative frameworks, medium- and long-term management strategies, macroeconomic planning, etc.).

32. Environmental health and sanitation infrastructure is in need of upgrading in most areas. Inadequate solid waste disposal and sewage systems, including proper treatment and disposal schemes, endanger the quality of the water supply and public health. Most communities in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, including those in densely populated urban areas, dispose of raw sewage into cess pits, which often overflow or seep into underground aquifers. In many municipal areas served by sewage schemes, the collection networks are antiquated and poorly maintained, and regularly overflow into the streets. Sewage treatment plants, where they exist, are inadequate, incomplete, poorly maintained and require extensive upgrading, rehabilitation and planned operation and maintenance. In particular, the benefit of completed, ongoing and planned projects in the Gaza Strip will not be fully realized until the treatment plant south of Gaza City has undergone a major upgrading and expansion. This plant is integral to the environmental health programme around Gaza City.

33. Agriculture is the most important sector of the economies of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Palestinian agriculture operates in a context of poor and few agricultural roads, limited application of new irrigation, land reclamation constraints and the absence of appropriate physical facilities (packing and grading houses, cold storage facilities, etc.). Economic development in the occupied territories should entail the upgrading of the agricultural industrial base, including the development of modern techniques of cultivation, irrigation, packaging, refrigeration, storage and shipment.

34. The infrastructure for private sector and industry is lacking, particularly the transportation infrastructure. There are no airports or seaports, and existing roads are inadequate. Many villages in the West Bank have no paved access. In Gaza, most of the road system is less than five metres wide and is only semi-paved or unpaved. As a result, industry is unable to transport raw material and finished products, trade is retarded and products reach the market in such poor condition that costs cannot be recovered. Ninety-five per cent of the urban Palestinian population of the West Bank enjoys continuous electrical supply. However, most rural areas receive electricity for a limited time every day. Twenty-five villages have no electrical supply at all. While almost all households in Gaza are connected to the electricity network, existing transformers fail to meet the combined demand of industrial and domestic

consumers. Frequent voltage fluctuations and the fact that the supply rarely reaches the standard 220 volts, undermine the development of Gaza industry. Machinery is damaged by surges and fluctuations and cannot operate at peak efficiency if the electrical supply is inadequate. Similarly, communications systems are presently controlled solely by the Israeli monopoly, except in the Gaza Strip, where the local utility is controlled by the Palestinian Authority. The majority of villages and camps in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip have no access to the telecommunications network. Even in urban areas, the grid requires expansion and extensive maintenance. In order to be competitive, industry, and the private sector in general, requires an improved and expanded road system, upgraded and expanded electrical and communications networks and access to technology. There is considerable need to construct national power generation plants, develop energy planning and information systems, create energy efficiency programmes for industry and the power sector and explore alternative renewable energy technologies (solar, wind and others). While primarily benefiting the private sector, the need for improved telephone and related services such as postal services, telex, telephone and data communications will also enhance the provision of health and social services and the quality of life in general.

35. The pressure on housing is very real. There is a need to plan and construct additional housing units, as well as to improve the living conditions of the refugees through rehabilitation of existing shelters.

36. The education system faces critical infrastructure problems, such as overcrowded classrooms, decrepit physical facilities and a near total absence of libraries or science laboratories. Priority should be placed on rehabilitation of old infrastructure and the construction of new/additional buildings, classrooms and laboratories to meet the quickly expanding needs of a growing population.

37. Government health care facilities are deteriorating, poorly maintained and under-equipped. The number of hospital beds is insufficient and poorly distributed. Construction and rehabilitation of hospitals, clinics, operating theatres, rehabilitation centres and special care facilities should be combined with the upgrading of medical equipment and the development of cost recovery mechanisms to sustain such inputs.

## 2. Integrated United Nations approach

38. The focus of the United Nations strategy for infrastructure and housing development should remain on rehabilitation, operation and maintenance of the existing physical infrastructure facilities as a first priority, while simultaneously developing sustainable capacity and skill within the Palestinian community to manage, operate and maintain such facilities, through the establishment of adequate management systems and structures, on-the-job training and transfer of skills and knowledge. Capital investments in infrastructure should be combined with tailored technical assistance packages.

39. In addition, new areas should be developed for new housing with integrated housing and infrastructure programmes. In general, attention should be given to

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the fundamental connection between infrastructure needs and housing strategies, preferably in a comprehensive development plan.

40. In rehabilitating and upgrading existing infrastructure and services, and developing new ones, the institutional strategy should be carefully elaborated with the Palestinian Authority. The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in telecommunications, the Universal Postal Union (UPU) in postal communications, as well as the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), UNRWA and UNDP have been active to varying degrees in this process. The financial strategy should be based on two options: (a) cost recovery through user charges complemented by targeted subsidies; and (b) optimum mobilization of fiscal resources. An adequate financial strategy is a prerequisite for sustainable development. Finally, the technical strategy should take an approach based on affordable standards and labour-intensive methods and techniques.

41. The housing policy should focus on strengthening existing institutional capacity in the public and private sector; housing finance and affordability, including credit and innovative loan products; labour-intensive construction techniques; use of small-scale contractors; and support to the informal sector technically and financially. Work should also proceed on creating a favourable policy environment and legislative regulatory instruments (planning standards, building by-laws, building permits, etc.) suitable to local conditions. Land for housing and land markets is crucial, and any housing policy should address both environmental and equity objectives. The objective should be to strike a balance between the land market and its capacity to deliver land on commercial terms, and land resources management as a condition for sustainable human development. The preparatory process for the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), which will be held at Istanbul in June 1996, will provide opportunities for Palestinian policy-makers to discuss housing issues, as well as a sustained flow of information.

42. The long-term feasibility and sustainability of any infrastructure project depends on the capability of covering the running costs. Donors have been reluctant to fund running costs of projects. Where projects aim at providing critical services to the Palestinian community, such as large-scale infrastructure projects (sewage/water schemes, treatment plants, etc.), a progressive transfer of the maintenance and operation costs to the managing institutions should be designed into capital investment projects, together with the phasing-in of cost recovery mechanisms. Cost recovery mechanisms can only work when clients are satisfied with services provided and are convinced that fees will keep systems running in the future.

#### B. United Nations assistance in institution-building

43. Palestinian institutions in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip have existed in three distinct areas: central government, local government, and non-governmental organizations. In central government, Palestinians filled technical and operational functions. As a result, there is a relatively large and skilled human resource base for central government, particularly within sectors such as agriculture, health, education, and finance. However, there is

a gap at the public administration management, policy formulation and decision-making levels of central government which previously fell under the responsibility of Israeli military officials of the civil administration.

44. The Palestinian Authority assumed responsibility for these functions in the Gaza Strip in July 1994, and the scope of its powers extended to areas of central government responsibility in the West Bank in December 1994. As a result, a new level of Palestinian institutions was created in the area. In response, assistance by the United Nations system in institution-building has evolved rapidly over the past year, providing help with the organization and start-up of the Palestinian Authority, both to its ministries, which coordinate activities and formulate national-level policies in different sectors, and to local institutional structures.

45. In the area of local government, Palestinian public institutions have existed for decades in the form of small to medium-sized village councils, local development councils and medium to large municipal administrations. Many of the larger municipal administrations have not been able to perform fully the role of "civic" agents; however, many have accumulated a good deal of expertise in the operation and maintenance of public investments and utilities.

46. At the non-governmental level, a large number of Palestinian non-governmental organizations, sectoral associations of non-governmental organizations, charitable societies, cooperatives, research centres and community-based organizations have operated in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Many non-governmental organizations have served - and continue to serve - vital functions. Support from the United Nations system has been provided to and through this network of non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations.

47. In the absence of a central Palestinian authority, UNDP provided its public sector support at the municipal and local levels. Over the years, UNDP has supported various municipalities, primarily through large-scale infrastructure investments combined with training and technical assistance. Since 1994, UNDP has supported rural infrastructure investments, participatory planning and the upgrading of nine village councils through its Local Rural Development Programme. UNDP has responded to the most urgent needs of the Palestinian Authority by providing emergency start-up funding and procurement support to its 14 ministries, as well as the Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, the Palestinian Computer Centre, the Civil Defense Department, Palestinian TV and the Palestinian Environmental Protection Agency.

48. Since early 1995, UNDP has also been managing the TOKTEN (Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals) Programme, which sponsors the return of Palestinian expatriates living abroad for short-duration missions to provide advisory services, consultancy studies and training to Palestinian Authority ministries and private sector institutions. UNDP has also provided financial support to MAS (the Palestine Economic Policy and Research Institute) to undertake economic policy research and develop policy options for the management of the State.



49. In addition, the multi-project Employment-Generating Public Works Programme, established with assistance from UNDP and donors, builds local institutional capacity under the auspices of Programme Management Unit of the Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction in Gaza. The sustained efforts of the Programme Management Unit have been central to the development and implementation of infrastructure rehabilitation and construction programmes.

50. UNRWA's long history of assistance to education, health and social services for Palestinian refugees has had a significant impact on the future prospects for institution-building within these and other sectors. With over 5,000 teachers providing primary, preparatory and vocational schooling to 145,000 students, UNRWA dominates the public sector in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. UNRWA offers basic health and social services to over 1,000,000 registered refugees, operating around 230 out-patient facilities and employing some 100 physicians and 450 other health care workers. In the Gaza Strip, UNRWA provides monthly in-kind support to almost 100,000 of the poorest refugees.

51. UNRWA's activities over the past 50 years have built up substantive local capacity and have dramatically improved the Palestinian human resource base in health care, education and social welfare. These capacities help set the agenda for institutional development across several sectors and in the area of public administration in particular.

52. UNICEF has focused its activities in four key areas: primary health care, primary education, early childhood development, and youth and community development. Since the establishment of the Palestinian Authority, these priorities have shifted in nature towards a long-term institution-building approach, with an emphasis on building the capacity of the new Palestinian ministries and agencies. UNICEF is supporting the Palestinian Authority in its efforts to develop a national programme of action for the Palestinian child, which will provide a broad policy framework for addressing children's issues for the remainder of the decade and beyond.

53. In partnership with the Palestinian Authority, UNESCO has developed a programme of assistance consisting of 27 priority projects within its fields of competence. These include activities to promote strengthening of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Culture.

54. As a result of their several missions to the occupied territories, FAO and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) have jointly recommended an action programme for the restructuring, development and strengthening of the Palestinian public agricultural institutions.

55. In February 1994, Habitat conducted a study focusing on capacity-building at the municipality level in the occupied territories. In its report, Habitat recommends a series of support programmes, which could be incorporated into a comprehensive capacity-strengthening programme for municipalities.

56. WHO assistance has focused principally on institutional development and building an infrastructure for primary health care, secondary health care and environmental health, primarily in the Gaza Strip. WHO provided resources for

the establishment and operation of a number of departments of the Palestinian Health Authority. WHO also responded to the request of the Palestinian Council for Health for financial and other assistance in the recruitment of staff and the equipping of five units responsible for the transfer of health services to the Palestinian Authority, the establishment of a health-data system to serve as the basis for health planning; design and evaluation of an insurance system; design of a regulatory framework for health services; and establishment of priorities in the environmental health sector.

57. After fielding a multi-disciplinary mission to the occupied territories in December 1993, ILO made organizational and functional recommendations to strengthen the Ministry of Labour, workers' organizations such as the General Federation of Trade Unions and employers' organizations such as the Chambers of Commerce. Meanwhile, ILO has already started technical assistance and advisory support to the Ministry of Labour and the other institutions.

58. The Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories is coordinating bilateral and multilateral training programmes for the Palestinian police force. Utilizing a "training-of-trainers" approach, courses have thus far been given for over 500 police trainers. The Special Coordinator has played a central role in coordinating assistance to the police in several areas: in-kind donations; training; and, together with UNRWA, the channelling of donor contributions to cover salary and other recurrent costs of the Palestinian police force. Through close coordination with donors and daily contacts with senior police officials, the Office of the Special Coordinator maintains an overall view of the needs of the police force and the types of assistance offered, thereby avoiding duplication and overlap.

59. In-kind donations for the police were received from 16 donors. These donations covered requirements for: communications equipment, computer systems, construction of premises, forensic equipment, housing for families of the police force, personal and unit equipment, and vehicles. Training for members of the police force were provided by six donor countries and two United Nations organizations (the Centre for Human Rights and the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch of the United Nations Secretariat). Training covered the following areas: community policing, forensic science, human rights, investigation, management, maintenance of public order, public order and special duty, rescue service, role of the police and traffic. Most training activities were carried out in the Gaza Strip, though some courses were provided in donor countries. In early 1995, discussion between donor representatives and the Palestinian police force, facilitated by the Special Coordinator, began on the establishment of a Palestinian Police Academy to be built in Gaza. By June 1995, several donors had indicated to the Special Coordinator that they were considering providing a combined total of about \$1.1 million, which would cover the construction costs of the academy and resident dormitories for cadets.

60. The Department for Development Support and Management Services of the Secretariat has undertaken two needs assessment missions at the invitation of the Palestinian Authority - one on strengthening the capacities of the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation and the Ministry of Local Government Affairs, and the other on developing the institutional capacity of the Palestinian Authority in terms of civil service training and strengthening the

administrative functioning of the various ministries. United Nations Volunteers has also been exploring avenues of assistance to the Palestinian Authority and to United Nations organizations active on the ground requiring the specific expertise of United Nations Volunteers.

61. The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) has assisted Palestinians through training programmes in multilateral diplomacy and negotiations. Recently, UNITAR designed a training programme on the use of information system techniques for map production (such as land surveying, photogrammetry, cartography, geographic information systems and remote sensing) for Palestinians in the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, the Ministry of Local Government Affairs, the Palestinian Geographic Centre and the Ministry of Housing.

62. In its April 1995 mission to the occupied territories cited above, ICAO emphasized the need to restructure the Palestinian Civil Aviation Authority and to establish a comprehensive training programme with the technical assistance of ICAO.

#### 1. Main development needs

63. The years of very limited access of Palestinians to public office and the absence of opportunities for experience and training in the field of public administration, have left Palestinians with an impoverished public administration capacity. Palestinians have expressed the need to develop stable and lasting public institutions which can deliver public services to the Palestinian population in an efficient and effective manner. Public institutions should adopt and practice uniform and sound administrative and management practices and develop a well-functioning civil service that can implement policy decisions within a cohesive framework of Palestinian law.

64. Public sector institution-building in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip requires assistance in four key areas critical to stability and sustainability of the public institutions: the structure and operation of the ministries, the layering of administrative capacity, human resources management and development, and the legal system.

65. The Palestinian Authority has repeatedly stated that it is working towards the visible demarcation of responsibilities among its ministries in order to rationalize their respective roles and to define the relationships between them. The operational and administrative procedures that the ministries use to conduct their day-to-day business need to be improved, and there needs to be (a) a degree of decentralization of decision-making to qualified managers and technical specialists; (b) a building up of a professional civil service based on merit; (c) an improvement in communication flows within the ministries; and (d) a procedure for record-keeping in order to establish a solid foundation for institutional memory. In addition, there needs to be clarification as to which layer of the administration - central government level, local government level or non-governmental organization level - bears responsibility for what fields, in light of comparative advantages of each and the benefits to the development of government and civil society.

66. The Palestinian Authority must develop standardized and uniform procedures, establish a performance-related career system and provide training to its civil servants. Training requirements throughout the Palestinian Authority are large, but can be grouped into the following categories: training in public sector management throughout the ranks of the Palestinian Authority, specialized training in functional areas and training in administrative processes. As with other administrations, there is a need to centralize the functions of assessment of Palestinian Authority training requirements.

67. Economic and social development, democratic consolidation and the promotion and protection of human rights all require a strong, rational and predictable legal system for their effective implementation. The current situation is characterized by a patchwork of Ottoman, Egyptian, Jordanian, and British Mandate laws, Israeli military orders, Palestinian decrees and a justice system which is nascent and ill-equipped. Rationalization and reform of the legal system to international standards, with the corresponding independent administration of justice, represent sizable tasks for the Palestinian Authority, and the Authority could benefit from appropriate international support in fairly protecting the population's interests under the rule of law.

## 2. Integrated United Nations approach

68. The strategy of the United Nations system for support to institution-building is aimed at moving beyond emergency and start-up assistance to the nascent Palestinian Authority institutions towards long-term issues of building sustainable national capacities in all aspects of governance. Once sectoral development strategies have been articulated by the Palestinian Authority, follow-up technical and advisory support can be provided by the United Nations system.

69. A key starting-point in public administration development was the May 1995 UNDP mission, through its Management Development and Governance Division, to work with the Palestinian Authority to identify needs for action in public administration development and begin the process of formulating an overall national strategy for public administration development.

70. The mission discussed the clarification of ministry mandates with the Palestinian Authority, emphasizing that it should be handled in such a way as to meet the development needs defined above. The mission also raised the issue of the development of an internal management framework to steer, coordinate and implement its public administration development activities. An appropriate structure for undertaking public administration development needs to be put in place both at the policy-making level, so that policy decisions effecting public administration development can be made, and at the operational level, so that the groundwork, including studies and technical work, can be undertaken upon which recommendations for policy decisions will be made. Training for civil servants must also be a priority, as should strengthening local government structures to promote the full contribution of Palestinian municipalities, towns and villages to national development. An exchange of experience and expertise needs to take place between large and relatively successful municipalities and smaller village and local councils; the supporting and coordinating role of the

Ministry of Local Government Affairs needs to be strengthened; and the role of Palestinian non-governmental organizations, many of which operate in the public sphere, needs to be rationalized. The technical expertise of Habitat can be utilized here.

71. In addition, the difficult process of developing a fully Palestinian legal framework, based on the existing laws as a starting point, needs to be undertaken in order to legitimize the legal system and provide a solid legal foundation for development. Further support will also be required for the strengthening of institutions for the administration of justice.

### C. United Nations assistance in employment generation

72. ILO has been monitoring the conditions of workers in the occupied territories for almost two decades. The Director-General of ILO provides the International Labour Conference with an annual report on the situation of workers of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Soon after the September 1993 signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements, Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Arafat wrote and asked ILO to prepare a "blueprint" for the employment and social sectors of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The ILO policy and programme suggestions, agreed to by the Palestinian Authority in January 1994, is contained in a report of January 1994 entitled "Capacity-building for social development: programme of action for transition in the occupied Palestinian territories."

73. In July 1994, the Special Coordinator and UNDP in cooperation with the Programme Management Unit of the Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction, launched an \$8 million employment generation/public works programme with funds from Japan and Norway. The two principal objectives of the programme, which became known as the "Gaza clean-up", were to create jobs immediately and to generate improvements in the overall quality of life for Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.

74. The first phase of the "Gaza clean-up" programme (September 1994-February 1995) sought to rehabilitate the poor state of infrastructure in the Gaza Strip, improve environmental conditions and undertake a massive house and public buildings painting campaign. Solid waste from public areas was collected and several parks were rehabilitated, improved and equipped to provide communities with an improved social environment. The programme was implemented in five areas of the Gaza Strip using over 22 small contractors and with a direct labour content of over 4,000 temporary jobs, many of them for ex-detainees.

75. The "Gaza clean-up" initiative illustrated the immediate impact that coordinated efforts can have. The sectoral working group on employment generation of the Local Aid Coordination Committee has since prepared two documents identifying priorities and projects in the area of employment generation. Through the coordinated efforts of UNRWA, ILO, UNDP, the Programme Management Unit of the Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction, and donors, the sectoral working group on employment generation has identified rapidly implementable project proposals amounting to over

\$60 million, all designed to generate employment opportunities in the Gaza Strip and Jericho.

76. In this connection, UNRWA received funding amounting to \$10.5 million in the Gaza Strip for shelter rehabilitation and environmental health projects, and is currently in the final stages of negotiations for funding of the construction of playgrounds and schools. As a natural progression from this initiative, a second package of proposals is being formulated, covering more sustainable job creation, over a longer time scale. UNRWA has identified the need to construct additional schools, upgrade its vocational training centre, extend the graduate trainee programme and implement various environmental health projects. These proposals will provide much-needed services to the community, and at the same time will provide employment opportunities. UNRWA's Income Generation Programme, which runs a revolving loan programme in support of small enterprises, also targets job creation as a priority in its project development.

77. UNDP received funding for the following programmes which are being co-implemented with the Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction: (a) the Gaza clean-up project, completed in December 1994; (b) the parks and neighbourhood re-transformation project, presently under implementation; (c) the employment-intensive tiling and paving programme for Gaza City, launched in December 1994; (d) paving and tiling of roads and sidewalks; and (e) rehabilitation of social infrastructure.

78. ILO has the following ongoing employment-related activities: reintegration, through employment, of ex-detainees; assistance in the creation of a Ministry of Labour and the development of labour policy and legislation; capacity-building of the Federation of Palestinian Chambers of Commerce; capacity-building for Palestinian trade union federation; an income-generating programme for the disabled through the production and maintenance of wheel chairs; assistance to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, including a regular labour force survey; and technical assistance, including the preparation of a strategy paper, for labour-intensive infrastructure.

79. The main implementing agencies specifically addressing the unemployment problem are UNRWA, UNDP and the Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction. Other project managers include sector ministries, municipalities, village councils and non-governmental organizations. The management capacity of these implementation agencies has expanded considerably in the last year. UNRWA has increased its job creation activities from \$1 to \$2 million per year prior to the signing of the Declaration of Principles, to about \$35 million in 1994. The figure for UNDP for 1994 is \$22 million, up from \$11 million, and the Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction is currently managing over \$15 million worth of infrastructure projects. In order to expand the employment generation programme, all existing project management capacity, in particular project implementation capacity, will have to be used effectively, and, furthermore, additional capacity will have to be created.

## 1. Main development needs

80. Unemployment in the Gaza Strip is the most immediate social and economic problem facing the development effort in the occupied territories. Massive unemployment is at the core of social, economic and political instability. It is causing severe damage to Palestinian society and is a potential threat to the stability upon which development and peace must be built. Palestinians, donors and the United Nations are in agreement over the need for short-term employment generation programmes focused on the Gaza Strip.

81. A preliminary review by ILO of the construction techniques presently in use indicates that shifting to more labour-intensive techniques for certain activities (e.g. sewerage and surface drainage) could create additional employment, while for other construction activities (e.g. building of schools) possibilities for increasing the labour-intensiveness are very limited. To obtain a more substantial enhancement of employment in the short term would require an immediate increase in the volume of infrastructure investments.

82. Unemployment is a structural problem requiring long-term solutions. The economy of the Gaza Strip is at present incapable of absorbing those workers who are currently unemployed, and it is unlikely that it will be able to absorb the expected increases in the number of job-seekers in the years ahead. Specific measures to address this problem should encompass a combination of policy instruments at both macro and micro levels and should include labour migration, employment services, training and development of small and medium-sized enterprises as part of the development of a job-creation strategy for the Gaza Strip.

## 2. Integrated United Nations approach

83. A United Nations strategy should focus on increasing the labour-intensiveness of individual projects, while simultaneously increasing the volume of projects undertaken using all available implementation capacities. This is being pursued by UNDP, UNRWA and ILO through the Local Aid Coordination Committee sectoral working group on employment generation, together with the Palestinian Authority and donor countries. In addition, an integrated approach to addressing the unemployment crisis in the occupied territories, developed by the ILO as the Palestinian Employment Plan, would seek to create the policy conditions for sustained economic growth, and, in particular, to strengthen the employment policy formulation capability of the Ministry of Labour. The approach should work to improve the small enterprise environment, providing necessary support and services to improve productivity and income from self-employment and entrepreneurship. In addition, expanding the social safety net for widows, orphans, the disabled, the sick and ex-detainees and improving the quality, relevance, and labour market orientation of human resource development should be a priority of employment policy. Improving employment opportunities in Israel and the region is fundamental to addressing unemployment in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

84. In addition, three strategic priorities for project development have emerged from joint consultations between the United Nations, donors and the

Palestinian Authority: (a) infrastructure improvements should produce permanent benefits for the population of the Gaza Strip; (b) the labour-intensive approach should not be restricted to short-term emergency projects, but should also be applied to non-emergency projects where feasible and where cost-effective and timely execution is possible using labour-intensive methods; and (c) the identification and prioritization of projects should be carried out through consultations between the Palestinian Authority, municipalities, the United Nations and donors.

D. United Nations assistance to private sector development

85. UNDP assistance to private sector development has been designed to meet emerging needs in the light of the prevailing circumstances in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. UNDP has supported initiatives in the field of management assistance, management and technical training, improved marketing facilities, credit and capital assistance, as well as training in modern irrigation techniques to help address the diminishing water resources in the Gaza Strip and the cost of production. When citrus markets in Eastern Europe became inaccessible to Palestinian citrus produce, a citrus processing plant project was initiated in the Gaza Strip to absorb the overproduction. The fisheries sector, a staple sector of the Gaza economy, was supported by strengthening the fishermen's cooperative, helping it to build an ice factory and a fish market. Agriculture export marketing to Europe was bolstered through the construction of a packing and grading factory and cold storage facility at Beit Lahia cooperative in Gaza.

86. Upon the reactivation of the Palestinian Chambers of Commerce in 1991 and realizing the importance of private sector organizations, UNDP organized and conducted a study tour of representatives of all the Palestinian Chambers of Commerce to a number of Arab and European countries. Business development was modestly addressed through provision of advisory services, training, credit and strengthening of vocational training centres in both the West Bank and Gaza. As of the beginning of 1995, UNDP began implementation of its TOKTEN programme to mobilize Palestinian diaspora skills to assist private sector development and strengthen the supporting institutions that would nurture its growth.

87. UNRWA established its income generation programme in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank in 1991 in the form of a revolving loan fund to assist small businesses in both formal and informal sectors of the economy producing goods for sale locally and abroad. The goal of the programme is to create employment opportunities by promoting creation and expansion of small businesses primarily in the manufacturing and the productive sectors of the economy. In less than four years, the fund's capital base in the Gaza Strip alone has grown from approximately \$300,000 to \$4 million, supplying credit to over 170 small enterprises. The programme provides management support and training for entrepreneurs and, despite repeated shocks to the Gaza Strip economy, has managed to maintain a high repayment rate. At present, 35 per cent of its Gaza Strip capital fund of \$4 million is made up of repaid funds.

88. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has published a number of economic studies and surveys on the Palestinian economy



that have been used as references for research on the economies of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The UNCTAD secretariat has completed the first part of an inter-sectoral research project on prospects for sustained development of the Palestinian economy, identifying major problem areas and the immediate needs of the various economic and social sectors.

89. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) has been active in supporting development work in the West Bank for several years through the non-governmental organization American Near East Refugee Aid (ANERA), and, since 1991, the International Trade Centre (ITC) has been exploring ways to support agricultural marketing of West Bank and Gaza Strip produce. At the request of the Special Coordinator, ITC has also prepared a proposal for a technical cooperation project on the establishment of industrial zones in Gaza and the West Bank.

90. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) has long been delivering services for the industrial development of the occupied territories. From 1980 to 1993, 15 technical assistance projects were carried out, ranging from a survey of the manufacturing industry in 1986 to human resources development to pre-feasibility project identification studies as well as assistance to the chemical industries. In late 1994, UNIDO developed a programming strategy for services to the Palestinian people, through which UNIDO would provide technical assistance in the areas of private sector development, development of small- and medium-scale enterprises, human resources development for the industrial sector, acquisition and application of technology to enhance competitiveness and industrial regional cooperation and integration.

91. In its January 1994 report, ILO proposed a programme of action to contribute to capacity-building for the labour and social sectors through institution-building and training of institutional leadership, particularly the Palestinian Authority's Ministry of Labour, workers' organizations, such as the General Federation of Trade Unions both in Gaza and the West Bank, employers' organizations and the Chambers of Commerce. ILO has already begun efforts to strengthen the Ministry of Labour, has an ongoing project with the Palestine Statistical Bureau for the preparation of labour statistics and is assisting the Chambers of Commerce to review their constitutions and establish a computerized enterprise database.

92. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and ESCWA have jointly undertaken several agricultural sector studies, in 1993 and again in late 1994, focusing on the role of the public agricultural institutions. A programme of action has been recommended for the restructuring, development and strengthening of the Palestinian agricultural institutions. ESCWA has also addressed the need to develop entrepreneurship through training of trainers and training of potential entrepreneurs.

#### 1. Main development needs

93. The Palestinian Authority, as clearly delineated in its Programme for the Development of the Palestinian National Economy, emphasizes an economic policy lead by private sector growth. The role of the public sector is seen as one

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which should be defined by policies to enable private sector development (e.g. the establishment of predictable and guaranteed regulatory frameworks, public sector development of infrastructure, etc.).

94. The private sector accounts for about 85 per cent of GDP of the occupied territories. The sector is vulnerable because of its dependence on Israel as its principal trading partner (70 per cent of West Bank and Gaza Strip trade exports are to Israel) and supplier of raw materials and many finished products. In addition, one quarter of the Palestinian labour force is dependent on employment in Israel. The repeated closures have, therefore, had a negative impact on the private sector in Gaza, causing permanent reductions in consumer purchasing power and other manifestations of recession. Over time, the prohibitive investment environment in the occupied territories has stunted economic diversification. Private sector investments are heavily concentrated in the construction sector; 85 per cent of investments are made in construction, primarily in housing.

95. There is no substitute for a stable political environment and clear and efficient governance to induce investments and increase economic activity. The Palestinian Authority has inherited a fragmented institutional framework that is ill-equipped to prepare and implement development programmes or coordinate and administer the sizeable and varied inputs from donor countries. The need to strengthen the new Palestinian ministries and institutions to assist in creating an enabling environment is a great and immediate priority.

## 2. Integrated United Nations approach

96. The interventions of the United Nations system in private sector development should promote sustainable economic development through the support of local capacities, while taking full account of the needs of women and marginalized groups. In partnership with Palestinian counterparts, the United Nations should help to promote Palestinian Authority strategies and priorities, complement World Bank efforts in this sector and operate within a regional development perspective.

97. The planned approach of the United Nations system to development of Palestinian capacities in trade includes advice to the Palestinian Authority on foreign trade strategies and the establishment and strengthening of the institutional infrastructure for trade development and promotion. At the level of the enterprises themselves, United Nations agencies plan to support product and market development for selected sectors (including quality upgrading) as well as assistance to trade and industry in diversifying their exports through the establishment of effective and efficient trade support services (e.g. purchasing and supply management, trade information, quality management, costing and pricing, support to small and medium-sized enterprises, export-oriented joint ventures and legal aspects of foreign trade). A number of technical cooperation projects have been prepared by ITC and UNCTAD, the agencies specialized in trade issues. UNIDO has expressed an interest in the area of product development.

98. The United Nations system should provide technical assistance in support of investment promotion through the creation of an appropriate institutional and procedural framework for investment promotion. ITC and UNCTAD should contribute substantively to investment promotion and, through UNIDO, should build capacities to plan and assess industrial investments. Advisory and direct consultancy services need to be developed for potential investors in the preparation of pre-investment studies and the determination of an optimal financing plan. There is also a need for advice and training in support of export-oriented joint ventures, as well as training to increase the managerial skills of personnel in financing institutions.

99. Entrepreneurship is an important area of private sector development, as well as for the generation of employment. ESCWA, UNDP, ILO and UNRWA should continue to implement programmes to assist the Palestinian Authority to formulate and implement a plan of action to develop a conducive environment for entrepreneurship and self-employment, including harmonization and simplification of laws, rules and practices relating to small business registration, start-up and operation. ESCWA has formulated project proposals for the establishment of business and technology incubators to nurture new manufacturing start-ups and the creation of a National Small Business Council. ILO is proposing to revitalize the small business sector by building capacities for integrated small enterprise promotion through the Chambers of Commerce. The United Nations approach to the expanding informal sector seeks to increase the (low) participation rate of women in business start-ups and assist the Palestinian Authority, non-governmental organizations and private sector institutions in developing and implementing special financing and credit schemes for promoting entrepreneurship and starting small-scale businesses. ESCWA should expand its training programmes to support potential entrepreneurs, particularly women and social groups affected by unemployment.

100. A priority of private sector development is to organize and strengthen agricultural public institutions and address issues to support agricultural exports. The FAO strategy for agricultural development calls for an action programme to restructure, develop, and strengthen the Ministry of Agriculture in the context of ongoing development activities by the non-governmental organization community. ITC can provide direct consultancy services in export marketing of agricultural produce, with a view to the expansion and diversification of exports, by-products and markets. To overcome non-tariff barriers, UNDP formulated an action programme for pesticide residue testing and control of agricultural produce.

101. Industrial development requires support from the Palestinian Authority to create a favourable environment for industrial investment. Institutions should be set up to help enterprises obtain access to foreign markets, and industrial support services and infrastructure should be improved, including (a) industrial strategy and policy advice; (b) advisory and institutional support services on industry-related implications of global and regional economic and trade agreements; (c) establishment of the unified base of statistics and data on the manufacturing sector; (d) strengthening of the Chambers of Industry, industry associations and other concerned non-governmental organizations; (e) establishing a standards institution, setting industrial standards and introducing quality assurance measures. Industries of all sizes require access

to up-to-date information in a broad spectrum of areas, including technologies, equipment and machinery, patents, environmental protection, investment opportunities, technology transfer options, market trends and export potentials. In particular, small and medium-sized industries also require support in entering into joint venture arrangements and technology transfer negotiations and developing techniques of innovation, productivity and quality control for international competitiveness. In addition, small and medium-sized enterprises require sectoral policies, networking and basic technical support, while the capacity for developing human resources must be built up so that emerging industries in the occupied territories can respond effectively to the new industrial development challenges.

#### E. United Nations assistance in education

102. UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF and UNRWA have all played important roles in assisting the education sector in their specific capacities.

103. Between 1986 and 1993, the education sector received special attention from UNDP, focusing on building governmental and non-governmental schools in cities and in assisting some private schools at different levels. In 1992, the programme policy shifted to focus on classrooms for girls in rural areas. UNDP policy at present is to work in close cooperation with the Palestinian Authority Ministry of Education as well as with relevant non-governmental organizations. Current educational activities are focused mainly on provision or rehabilitation of infrastructures, such as construction of additional classrooms in villages, rehabilitation of two agricultural school buildings in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, rehabilitation of a school complex in Jericho and others. UNDP is presently implementing a comprehensive study on the school drop-out rate for girls and is planning a training series in leadership skills from a gender perspective for women already employed in government positions.

104. For more than four decades, UNESCO assistance has included promoting a Palestinian cultural identity, providing senior educational advisers to UNRWA, assisting in the development of an open learning system, granting fellowships to Palestinians studying abroad and providing equipment and furniture for the education institutions. Missions have been organized by UNESCO, in coordination with UNRWA, the World Bank, UNDP, UNICEF, ILO, UNIDO and WHO, aimed at reviewing the situation of education and identifying the needs associated with the reconstruction and development process. A Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People, including 12 project proposals for education (basic and secondary education, management of the education system and higher education) was agreed to in May 1995 by the Palestinian Authority and UNESCO. A Plan of Action has been adopted by the PLO/UNESCO Joint Coordination Committee comprising 26 activities.

105. UNICEF's programme of assistance to Palestinian women and children started in the West Bank and Gaza in 1980, focusing on the fields of health and education. In 1991, a larger UNICEF operational presence resulted in expanded cooperation in the fields of youth activities, out-of-school and community-based education, primary education and early childhood development. In the health sector, UNICEF is focusing on increasing and improving the quality of basic

services delivery to children and women and on filling critical gaps in what was a continuous emergency situation. In the absence of a government counterpart, support to educational projects centred on UNRWA and non-governmental organizations. Since August 1994, the UNICEF Jerusalem office has been upgraded to undertake an expanded programme in the West Bank and Gaza. In cooperation with the Palestinian Authority, the Ministry of Education, as well as with non-governmental organizations, the UNICEF educational programme comprises basic education, psychosocial rehabilitation of children and youth, early childhood development and non-formal education.

106. Since 1950, UNRWA has been the single largest provider of education in the Gaza Strip, ensuring free elementary and preparatory education to 109,833 refugee children in 159 schools, of which 108 schools operate on a double-shift system, utilizing a budget of \$35.4 million in 1993 and employing 3,170 teachers. In the West Bank, UNRWA is responsible for the technical and administrative supervision of elementary and preparatory education, comprising a total of 100 schools. The Agency has had to build and/or rent more schools and classrooms and employ more teachers to accommodate the natural increase in the school population. UNRWA also provides vocational training courses to Palestinian refugees with skills in industrial areas, trades, crafts or occupations (designing, producing, assembling, servicing or repairing of manufactured products). UNRWA's training centres play an important role in preparing young Palestinian refugee boys and girls for employment opportunities.

#### 1. Main development needs

107. The Palestinian Authority took charge of the educational system on 28 August 1994 for the first time after 27 years of occupation. For the Palestinians, in general, and for the Ministry of Education, in particular, this transfer of authority represented a real challenge to work on upgrading the educational system and raising its standards to provide Palestinians with better conditions of living, meet the needs of Palestinian society and to be able to interact and compete with the world community.

108. In the past 27 years, higher education institutions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip were established independently and have continued to operate during the occupation, under the coordination of the Council for Higher Education. There are now 8 universities, all private, with an enrolment of 29,508 students in 1994-1995, and 21 community colleges (5 government, 12 private and 4 UNRWA), with 7,500 students. Though higher education is comparatively well-developed in quantitative terms, its major concern is that of academic quality and difficulties arising from the temporary closure of universities by military order during the period of the intifadah.

109. In basic (grades 1-10) and secondary education, the situation is more complex. Since 1948, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip have followed different educational systems - the Jordanian system for the West Bank and the Egyptian system for the Gaza Strip. Education has been provided in three ways during the occupation - public schools administered by the Israeli authorities, UNRWA schools and private schools. The total number of public schools, UNRWA and private schools is 1,433. During the 1994-1995 school-year, 238,000 students

were enrolled in the Gaza Strip and 345,000 in the West Bank (not including private schools). The gross enrolment rates in 1994 were the following: 70 to 85 per cent for primary schools, 45 to 65 per cent for preparatory schools and 25 to 35 per cent for secondary schools. Girls account for 48 per cent of total enrolment of primary education and 44 per cent of secondary level. Recent research shows comparatively low achievement levels in school education, which can be explained by the disruption of the school system during the last decade, the closing of educational institutions for long periods, the shortage of funds and equipment and the lack of maintenance of school facilities.

110. Pre-school education is usually supported by the private sector and by non-governmental organizations. With the limited funds available to the education sector, it should continue to be supported privately, and the Ministry of Education could play a supervisory role.

111. Non-formal education programmes (adult education/literacy) are usually carried out and supported by a variety of social and educational institutions as well as by non-governmental organizations. The Ministry of Education does not provide financial support for non-formal education, but it plans to supervise the quality of teachers and of teaching in literacy programmes, to support literacy centres and continuing education units and to provide the legal framework for the integration of formal and non-formal education programmes. More integration and linkages between formal and non-formal education should be encouraged to sustain education as a field covering a full range of learning needs of children, youth and adults.

112. The Ministry of Education is in need of external assistance to develop the educational system because of a lack of financial resources and technical expertise. Development projects are currently planned by the Ministry of Education in order to raise the quality of education and introduce a unified educational system, to develop the skills required in the modern world, to train high-level technicians and scientists and to launch inter-university cooperation programmes. Emphasis is also laid on the integration of young people and adults whose studies or careers were interrupted because of the emergency situation and on the need to offer them opportunities for work through training programmes.

113. On several occasions, the Ministry of Education has stressed the necessity and the importance for the donor community to harmonize the project proposals with the following priorities: (a) supporting school rehabilitation and reconstruction; (b) providing schools with equipment and educational material; (c) supporting teacher training; (d) establishing and supporting a curriculum development centre; (e) developing the community colleges; (f) supporting the planning and information system; (g) improving qualitative development of higher education institutions and research; (h) developing the capacity of the Ministry of Education; (i) supporting non-formal education and special education.

114. Within the objective of sustaining universal access to basic education and developing secondary and higher education, the Ministry of Education emphasized the importance of fostering education for girls and women.

## 2. Integrated United Nations approach

115. The United Nations approach is to build local capacities for implementation of policies and programmes in line with the World Declaration on Education For All and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, stipulating that by the year 2000 all children should have access to primary education and at least 80 per cent of them should achieve a basic minimum level of primary education. Early childhood activities should be expanded and adult illiteracy rates should be halved, with a particular focus on reducing gender disparity, focusing on the education of girls and women. Support for capacity-building of the Palestinian Authority institutions has become a priority for UNICEF and the formulation of a national programme of action has become an immediate goal to ensure political and social mobilization and long-term planning for children.

116. Based on consultations with the Ministry of Education, the United Nations inter-agency meeting, held in Gaza on 15 and 16 June 1995, agreed upon principles to guide the United Nations strategy for education which included: (a) United Nations compliance with the strategies and priorities established by the Ministry of Education; (b) cooperation among United Nations sister agencies, in close coordination with the Office of the Special Coordinator, the donor community and the non-governmental organizations; (c) consultation with United Nations agencies to emphasize complementarity of programmes; (d) sharing of expertise and experiences of the United Nations agencies and the Palestinian Authority; (e) coordinated fund-raising efforts.

117. In light of the needs identified above, United Nations agencies and programmes, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, have targeted the following areas of assistance: the planning, monitoring and management capacities of the Ministry of Education need to be strengthened, particularly in the areas of assessment of teaching and learning, data collection and analysis, policy planning, budgeting and financial analysis and training and supervision of administrative and professional staff.

118. Educational infrastructures require upgrading and expansion. The lack of investment during the occupation and rapid population growth have left the educational infrastructure overburdened (double or triple shifts and shortage of facilities). Most schools, whether belonging to UNRWA or the Palestinian Authority, are overcrowded, with the average classroom size currently exceeding 50 pupils. Decreasing the average class size is necessary to improve both access and quality. Additional classrooms and schools are required for the growing student population. In addition to selecting schools to be upgraded or built, the issue of equity between regions and genders should be assessed, with studies on selected policy matters, such as reducing imbalances for disadvantaged groups and increasing internal efficiency, in order to enable policy makers to make decisions based on in-depth analyses of local conditions and on comparative analysis of countries facing similar problems.

119. Palestinian children and youth lack a safe and enriching out-of-school environment to promote their psychological well-being and growth. Early childhood development and the social, emotional and cognitive development needs of young children should be accorded more resources and should be addressed more systematically. In addition, informal education programmes, such as literacy

and adult education programmes and community-based education activities (integration of "life skills" learning, use of play, arts, recreational activities) need to be supported.

120. Higher education, vocational and technical education should be re-examined and the linkage of higher education institutions with the new economic and social needs and the community should be analysed and strengthened. Teaching and learning quality should be advanced through the establishment of a curriculum development unit, which would provide a unified standard of education for both Palestinian Authority and UNRWA schools in the West Bank and Gaza, based on improved content, teaching methods, student achievements and attitudes.

121. Close relations have been established by UNRWA with the Ministry of Education in the field of in-service training for teachers and maintenance of government schools, providing the Ministry of Education with a supporting and advisory role. In close cooperation with the Palestinian Authority, UNRWA is planning an assessment of teaching standards and a project proposal for the upgrading of teachers' qualifications. An evaluation of educational facilities will also be undertaken to improve the quality of accommodation.

122. ITC is interested in supporting training activities for human resources development. Within the framework of a project for capacity-building for social development, ILO is currently supporting vocational education and training activities. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has expressed the interest and availability to support the field of health and population education, targeting in particular girls and women. No projects are currently implemented by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), but work is in progress to analyse the situation and to identify areas of collaboration with other agencies (analysis of gender gaps to promote equity of education). UNITAR has expressed its willingness to build and strengthen human capacities with training courses and packages for higher education, for a planned amount of \$700,000 for the next two years.

123. The role of WHO in the education sector is through health education, human resources development and training of medical staff (mental health centre in Gaza, mother/child health education), in particular for new specialities and for supporting medical schools.

#### F. United Nations assistance in health

124. United Nations organizations have played an active role in the health sector. UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNRWA and WHO have all been actively engaged in discussions with the Palestinian Council of Health prior to the redeployment in May 1994 and later with the Ministry of Health. These agencies assisted in developing health sector plans that incorporate a national approach to planning in the health sector, while taking note of the Interim Action Plan which was presented by the Ministry of Health.

125. UNDP is contributing to the health sector by supporting and facilitating the work of the Palestinian Coalition for Women's Health. The Coalition is working on policy formulation at the grassroots level. The Coalition has



prepared a Palestinian Policy on Women's Health, is training health care providers and has launched wide-scale awareness campaigns. Through its Rural Development Project, UNDP is also supporting the training of women health workers and is financing two community-based clinics in two northern villages.

126. In addition, UNDP has been actively involved in the environmental health sector, addressing such issues as construction rehabilitation, upgrading and maintenance of water supply schemes in rural and urban areas, sewage collection systems, training of municipal staff, water resources management and public awareness campaigns.

127. UNFPA has been requested by the Ministry of Health to develop a reproductive health care programme at the primary health care level, including information activities, in accordance with the recommendations of the International Conference on Population and Development held at Cairo in September 1994.

128. UNICEF's programme components in the health sector include the Expanded Programme of Immunization and the Control of Acute Respiratory Infections and Control of Diarrhoeal Diseases programmes. In tackling nutritional issues, UNICEF has initiated the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative. UNICEF is also involved in projects in the areas of maternal health, health services management, psychosocial health and early childhood development.

129. In line with the World Summit for Children goals for children and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, UNICEF has developed a programme of assistance which targets the development of policy and protocols in the health sector and supports the management, human resources development, monitoring and evaluation of projects. Accordingly, UNICEF has initiated and supported the development of the National Programme of Action for Children. UNICEF is currently supporting the establishment of a permanent Health Services Management Unit.

130. UNRWA has had a long involvement in the health sector in the Gaza Strip, where it provides 75 per cent of primary health care services. UNRWA's 65 doctors, 149 nurses and 35 paramedics, among other health professionals, in Gaza operate out of nine general service health centres, six of these on double shift. There are an additional seven mother and child health clinics, as well as dental and specialist clinics. UNRWA subsidizes 50 out of the 85 beds in the Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza City. In 1993, UNRWA began construction of the Gaza Hospital, a 230-bed facility near Khan Younis. The Hospital is nearing completion and will serve the southern Gaza Strip. The acquisition and expansion by UNRWA of Gaza's principal nursing college will contribute to the staffing of the hospital now under construction.

131. UNRWA's health services provide primary health care as well as hospital service at the secondary and tertiary levels. Hospital services are provided at UNRWA's hospital in Qalqilya town and at other hospitals through subsidies (for example, UNRWA subsidizes 118 beds at the Augusta Victoria Hospital in Jerusalem and over 50 beds at a number of institutions throughout the West Bank).

132. Under the first phase of its Peace Implementation Programme, UNRWA has received funding for environmental health projects (e.g. upgrading solid waste and sewerage/drainage in the West Bank and Gaza Strip), as well as the construction and rehabilitation of laboratories, clinics, health centres and other health institutions. Funding has also been received for health education campaigns, training programmes and medical supplies. Under the second phase, further environmental and other health projects have been identified and designed and are ready for implementation.

133. WHO assistance has focused on institutional development of the Palestine Council of Health and the Ministry of Health to meet the immediate health needs of Palestinians within the framework of the National Health Plan. WHO's objectives are to develop effective and efficient management capacities in the National Health Authority to upgrade health care services and ensure the continuity of health care provision; and to formulate a detailed five-year implementation plan.

134. Other agencies and programmes active in the health sector include the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which has prepared a technical assistance programme aimed at upgrading skills for application of nuclear science and technologies in the health sector. The World Food Programme (WFP) has been active in providing emergency food assistance as recently as March 1995, when WFP provided food support to 7,150 of the most destitute families in the Gaza Strip.

#### 1. Main development needs

135. A Palestinian National Health Plan, drawn up by the National Health Plan Commission, targets three strategic orientations: disease prevention, health promotion and health protection. The Plan sets out a number of specific areas of concern, such as coordinating and developing an action plan for all health providers (the Palestinian Authority, UNRWA, the private sector and non-governmental organizations); reducing health disparities by region and social group; increasing access to services for all; encouraging cost effectiveness in health care delivery; developing health service standards and criteria of professionalism; and establishing a comprehensive health insurance system.

#### 2. Integrated United Nations approach

136. The United Nations approach to the health sector is based on the mandates of United Nations organizations active in the sector and on support to the Palestinian National Health Plan. The United Nations approach includes technical assistance for health programmes and projects; support to health institutions; strengthening coordination of activities of the United Nations, non-governmental organizations and other agencies in order to avoid duplication; formulation of national and institutional policies and strategies; development of a universal base of health sector data required for health planning; strengthening national capacity to manage health services; and formulation of policies and strategies for human resources development.

137. The United Nations system should provide technical assistance in the areas of national health planning, education and training of health staff, rehabilitation of health facilities, implementation of environmental health projects, acquisition of equipment and medical supplies needed for specific projects and regional integration in health sector development. In addition, the Ministry of Health will require support in the establishment and/or strengthening of training institutions and the development of course curricula for training of trainers in technical and management aspects of health service provision. The Ministry of Health will also require United Nations assistance in the transfer of new technologies and the introduction of information management systems, as well as the establishment of standards, preparation of health legislation and introduction of quality control measures.

ANNEX

United Nations departments, programmes and agencies active  
in the occupied territories

Centre for Human Rights  
Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch  
Department for Development Support and Management Services  
Economic and Social Council for Western Asia (ESCWA)  
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)  
International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)  
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)  
International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)  
International Labour Organization (ILO)  
International Maritime Organization (IMO)  
International Telecommunications Union (ITU)  
International Trade Centre UNCTAD/GATT (ITC)  
Office of the United Nations Coordinator in the Occupied Territories  
United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)  
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)  
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)  
United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP)  
United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)  
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)  
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)  
United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)  
United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)  
United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)  
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)  
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East  
(UNRWA)  
United Nations Volunteers (UNV)  
Universal Postal Union (UPU)  
World Food Programme (WFP)  
World Health Organization (WHO)

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OF HUMANITARIAN AND DISASTER  
RELIEF ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED  
NATIONS, INCLUDING SPECIAL  
ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE: ASSISTANCE  
TO THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL  
Substantive session of 1996  
Item 5 (c) of the provisional  
agenda\*\*  
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HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS:  
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING  
OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL  
COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES BY  
THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES  
AND THE INTERNATIONAL  
INSTITUTIONS ASSOCIATED  
WITH THE UNITED NATIONS

Assistance to the Palestinian people

Report of the Secretary-General

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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. On 20 December 1995, the General Assembly adopted resolution 50/58 H entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people", in which it, inter alia, stressed the importance of the appointment of the Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories; urged Member States and agencies of the United Nations system to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people to assist in the development of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, with emphasis on national execution and capacity-building and to do so in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions; called upon the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs; and requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to the Assembly on the implementation of the resolution, containing: (a) an assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people; and (b) an assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them.

2. Terje Rød-Larsen continued his functions as United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories as outlined in the previous report on assistance to the Palestinian people (A/50/286-E/1995/113). The present report covers the period from June 1995 through May 1996.

3. Throughout the period under review, the Special Coordinator focused his efforts on:

(a) Supporting ongoing and proposed activities of the over 20 United Nations agencies and programmes operational or seeking to become operational in the West Bank and Gaza Strip within the framework of the integrated and targeted programme adopted at the June 1995 United Nations inter-agency meeting convened by the Special Coordinator in Gaza;

(b) Strengthening the coordination structures on the ground linking the Palestinian Authority, the Government of Israel, the international donor community, and the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the United Nations, as well as the role of the United Nations within those structures;

(c) Working with all parties in the development effort, and in particular the Palestinian Authority and the Government of Israel, to help maintain its momentum, especially during periods of crisis.

4. Following the June 1995 inter-agency meeting, sectoral strategies covering education, health, employment generation, infrastructure and housing, institution-building and the private sector were finalized. They articulated a coordinated, integrated and targeted approach to the main developmental priorities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip as identified by the Palestinian Authority. Each of the six strategies included proposals from United Nations agencies and programmes for specific technical and project assistance for implementation beginning in late 1995 and 1996. The total package of proposals

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amounted to projects worth approximately \$550 million. The proposed programme of assistance contained in the United Nations strategy papers was developed in coordination with the relevant sectoral ministries of the Palestinian Authority, as well as with the Palestinian Authority Ministry for Planning and International Cooperation. In addition, representatives from the Palestinian Authority, donor countries and the World Bank participated in the United Nations inter-agency meeting at which the strategy papers had been reviewed in draft form.

5. The United Nations proposed programme of assistance for 1996 was formally presented to the donor community by the Special Coordinator at the ministerial-level meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, the main donor-led body overseeing the assistance effort, held on 28 September 1995. The meeting was convened on the occasion of the signing of the Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in Washington, D.C. At the meeting, the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee stressed the imperative to respond quickly to the major achievement in the political arena represented by the Interim Agreement by intensifying efforts in the economic arena. It was decided to hold a ministerial conference of donor countries as soon as possible, and that this conference would be preceded by a World Bank-led Consultative Group meeting to be convened on 18 and 19 October 1995 in Paris.

6. Continuing the close cooperation of the past year, the United Nations and the World Bank jointly prepared a policy document for consideration by donors at the October 1996 Consultative Group meeting. Entitled "Putting peace to work: priorities and strategies for the second phase of the development effort in the West Bank and Gaza Strip", the document was prepared in close coordination with the Palestinian Authority, in consultation with the Government of Israel and following discussions with key donors. For its part, the Palestinian Authority established a "core list" of technical and infrastructural assistance projects, drawing from proposed United Nations, World Bank and bilateral activities. The core list required approximately \$550 million in donor funds, of which 27 projects valued at approximately \$100 million were for implementation by agencies and programmes of the United Nations. The main elements of the joint United Nations/World Bank policy document were discussed during the Consultative Group meeting and were widely reflected in the Chair's summary.

7. The Ministerial Conference on Economic Assistance to the Palestinian People was held on 9 January 1996 in Paris. Conference participants emphasized, inter alia, the importance of improving the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people through a comprehensive effort to create jobs, improve physical and social infrastructure and establish the basis for sustainable economic growth in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In this connection, the Palestinian Authority's "core list" of development activities for 1996, as well as other activities proposed by the Palestinian Authority, the World Bank and the United Nations were considered by donors. At the Conference itself and over the following weeks, approximately \$805 million was pledged by donors for investment projects and an additional \$72.5 million was pledged towards the 1996 Palestinian Authority recurrent budget deficit projected at \$75 million.

8. According to information provided by United Nations organizations to the Office of the Special Coordinator, agencies and programmes of the Organization



received approximately \$105 million in donor funding between July 1995 and June 1996 for technical and infrastructural project assistance for the benefit of the Palestinian Authority and the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Of the United Nations projects contained in the Palestinian Authority core list, 19 received approximately \$59 million in donor funding. These figures do not include funding for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) regular programmes of education, health and relief and social services, which would amount to approximately \$150 million for the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1996; nor do they reflect the decision of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to double the funding from its own "core resources" for the period 1996-1998, to a minimum of \$8 million. By mid-1996, many donors had yet to commit their 1996 pledges to specific projects. It was therefore anticipated that further funding would be received by United Nations organizations during the second half of the year.

9. The development effort suffered a severe setback beginning on 25 February 1996 when a series of suicide terrorist attacks, which killed nearly 60 persons, prompted the Government of Israel to implement a series of countermeasures, including the closure of the occupied territories. The closure order prevented the movement of persons and goods into or out of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. For the Palestinian economy and for the fiscal position of the Palestinian Authority, the closure had devastating consequences. Domestic unemployment rose sharply as businesses were unable to maintain their access to external markets either for the purpose of importing or for exporting. In addition, the estimated 70,000 Palestinians who had worked in Israel during February 1996 were unable to enter Israel owing to the closure order. The decline in economic activity in the territories and of employment in Israel led to a sharp reduction in Palestinian Authority revenues. By mid-April 1996, with the closure still in place, the 1996 recurrent budget deficit was estimated to have increased by some \$100 million above the \$75 million projected in late 1995.

10. In response to the closure of the territories, the Special Coordinator proposed a framework for a plan aimed at an easing of the closure and the establishment of a donor-funded emergency employment creation programme. The United States announced on 28 March 1996 that the Palestinian Authority, the Government of Israel and the Government of Norway, representing the donor community, had agreed to the framework that had been put forward by the United Nations. Over the following weeks, steady increases were recorded in the movement of goods into and out of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The overall volume of trade, however, remained below the pre-closure level. The number of Palestinian workers employed in Israel was approximately 10,000 at the end of May 1996.

11. The United Nations responded rapidly to the call of the Palestinian Authority for assistance in creating employment opportunities. With special earmarked contributions from several donor countries, both UNRWA and UNDP began implementation of projects in mid-March that were expected to provide up to 5,000 employment opportunities during 1996. The UNDP projects were implemented jointly with the Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction (PECDAR).

12. From 15 to 17 April 1996, the Special Coordinator convened the third United Nations inter-agency meeting in Gaza. The main purpose of the meeting, which was attended by over 20 agencies and programmes of the Organization, was to establish priorities for the United Nations programmes of assistance during 1997. These priorities, accompanied by project proposals for addressing unmet needs, will be presented in the form of six documents covering education, health, employment generation, infrastructure and housing, institution-building and the private sector. United Nations organizations developed their proposed 1997 programmes in response to needs and priorities identified by the Palestinian Authority, whose sectoral ministries participated in the inter-agency meeting. Donors and World Bank officials also participated in the sectoral workshops of the meeting. The United Nations documents will be presented to donors at the next World Bank-led Consultative Group meeting, which is expected to take place during the second half of 1996.

II. ASSISTANCE TO THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE: ONGOING PROGRAMMES,  
UNMET NEEDS AND PROPOSALS FOR ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE

A. United Nations assistance in education

1. Background

13. Education is the largest service sector run by the Palestinian Authority and caters to the social, educational and employment needs of more than 35 per cent of the population. The number of people employed or enrolled in the various educational institutions in the West Bank and Gaza, is estimated by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education to be 719,233. The Ministry was established in August 1994 and employs more than 22,000 people. The total estimated cost of the educational system is \$180 million annually (excluding higher education). In total, \$130 million is needed for salaries and \$50 million for administration, including \$5 million for textbooks.

14. In 1994/95, there were more than 1,474 schools in the West Bank and Gaza: 1,084 Palestinian Authority schools, 259 schools run by UNRWA and 131 private schools. There are 21 community colleges, of which 4 are run by UNRWA, and 8 universities. Pre-school education is sustained by the private sector and by non-governmental organizations, supported by the Ministry of Social Affairs. The Ministry of Education and Higher Education does not provide financial support for non-formal education, but plans to supervise the quality of teachers and literacy programmes and support literacy centres and continuing education units.

15. In spite of the many problems facing the sector, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education made few administrative and educational changes during its first year of operation, in order to avoid unnecessary disruption. Steps were taken to unify the West Bank and Gaza Strip educational systems into a uniform curriculum. A major achievement was the organizing of the secondary school matriculation exam. Other achievements of the Ministry during its first year of operation, included constructing and rehabilitating schools, setting up the Palestinian Curriculum Development Centre, printing textbooks for the 1995/96 school year, and introducing English into the fifth and sixth grades in the Gaza

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Strip. The Ministry declared 1996 to be the "Year for Quality of Education", with the aim of raising teachers' standards.

## 2. Assistance provided

16. Within the United Nations system, UNRWA, UNDP, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) have played an important role in assisting the education sector. Other United Nations agencies provide technical and financial assistance for training and rehabilitation.

17. UNDP has focused on improving infrastructural facilities through the construction and renovation of schools and classrooms and on increasing access for girls to educational opportunities. Based on the priorities of the Ministry of Education, UNDP launched several infrastructural projects in 1995 and 1996, including the rehabilitation of a school and cultural complex in the city of Jericho, 18 schools in rural West Bank communities and the premises of the Ministry of Education in Ramallah. Support was also provided for renovation works in 19 educational facilities in the Gaza Strip. Three youth centres were renovated and sports facilities provided in Jericho, Gaza and Rafah under an umbrella project jointly implemented by UNDP, UNICEF and UNRWA. In February 1996, UNDP launched a project aimed at defining the extent of the school dropout phenomenon and its geographical and gender distribution. The study will make policy recommendations to the Ministry of Education and will introduce remedial programmes, especially for female dropouts. UNDP has also provided support for in-service training and curriculum development in agricultural training schools.

18. UNESCO has a long tradition of involvement in Palestinian education, through support for the education programme of the Palestine Liberation Organization and for the UNESCO/UNRWA Department of Education. In 1994, UNESCO launched a comprehensive Culture of Peace Programme to give greater emphasis to countries and territories in conflict. Within this context, UNESCO carried out two missions to review the Palestinian education sector in 1994. The missions identified and extended assistance to 11 priority areas. Those for which funds were mobilized and projects initiated included capacity-building of the Ministry of Education; establishment of the Palestinian Curriculum Centre; rehabilitation of 14 schools in the Gaza Strip and 3 schools in the West Bank; the establishment of a model kindergarten in Gaza City; financing of an international workshop for the development of the vocational/technical education system; a project for capacity-building in educational policy formulation and management; and a proposal to establish, through the Palestinian European Academic Cooperation in Education (PEACE) programme network, UNESCO Chairs in Archaeology, Foreign Language Teaching and Marine Sciences.

19. The objectives and strategies of the UNICEF education programme are based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the goals of the World Summit for Children and the National Programme of Action, which advocate the right of all children to basic education. To meet these objectives, UNICEF's Education Programme is implemented through three main projects focusing on formal and non-formal education: early childhood development/psychosocial health; primary

education; and youth and community development. Under the last category, in 1995, 110 community-based camps for children and youth were organized and 700 youth leaders trained in planning educational, recreational, art and environmental activities for children.

20. Since 1950, UNRWA has been the single largest provider of education in the Gaza Strip and a major provider in the West Bank. The overall objective of the UNRWA education programme is to continue to provide general education, in-service teachers' education, vocational, technical and higher education, and university scholarships for refugees. The UNRWA regular educational budget for 1995 was \$41.6 million for Gaza and \$24.9 million for the West Bank. Following the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements in September 1993, UNRWA established its Peace Implementation Programme (PIP). The programme targeted basic infrastructural projects in education, health and the social sector. Under PIP, UNRWA received \$51.7 million in donor funding for education-related projects and concentrated its efforts on upgrading its facilities.

21. UNRWA has completed the construction of 25 new schools in the Gaza Strip and is in the process of constructing 7 new schools in the West Bank. Over 100 UNRWA and Palestinian Authority schools were upgraded, and funding has been allocated for the construction of over 75 new classrooms and specialized rooms. UNRWA ensures that all its activities are closely coordinated with the Ministry of Education and has undertaken the construction of over 55 playgrounds in its own facilities and Palestinian Authority schools. The UNRWA University Scholarship Schemes benefit students who receive high marks in their secondary school examinations, and UNRWA has initiated a pilot project to train music teachers in its schools in the West Bank. Other projects include construction activities at the Gaza Training Centre and a number of projects to upgrade and extend the Kalandia and Ramallah vocational training centres in the West Bank.

22. The International Labour Organization (ILO) fielded several technical missions to examine the needs of the vocational training sector, with particular reference to workers' education programmes and training activities for Ministry of Labour officials. ILO, through the International Training Centre in Turin, is also assisting the Ministry of Education in a programme for the development of technical colleges.

23. In the area of education, the World Food Programme (WFP) supports vocational training by providing meals to women and youth trainees. In 1996, WFP is assisting nine social institutions by providing daily food rations to 850 youths. Additional assistance is being provided to 100 trainees at two rehabilitation centres for the mentally and physically disabled. Such food assistance provides indirect income support and encourages regular attendance.

### 3. Main development needs

24. The task of restructuring and developing the educational system inherited by the Palestinian Authority is enormous. The infrastructure had deteriorated and facilities had failed to keep pace with population growth, leading to double and sometimes triple shifting in most schools. The curriculum differed between

the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and vocational training and extracurricular activities were inadequate. Academic standards were particularly affected as a result of the severe interruptions during the years of the intifadah and Israeli countermeasures. Following the transfer of responsibility for education to the Palestinian Authority in 1994, new challenges arose from the continued rapid increase in the school population and the need to accommodate the children of returnees. Statistics indicate that 40 new schools are needed annually to accommodate the growth rate.

25. In its second year of operation, the Ministry of Education believes that it can expand its efforts to effect quality changes in the educational system. In order to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century, the Ministry has stressed the importance of United Nations agencies and the donor community integrating the following objectives into their policies: improving access to schooling; improving the quality of teaching and learning; and increasing the relevance of education to society's needs.

26. To achieve these global objectives, a National Plan of Action has been prepared by the Ministry of Education, and a number of priorities have been defined as requiring urgent attention and financial and technical assistance. To accommodate the increase in student numbers, a detailed proposal for funding has been prepared at an estimated cost of \$230 million, covering both school construction and maintenance, but excluding UNRWA schools and the private sector. School equipment and supplies will come to an estimated \$5 million over the next two years. To encourage management decentralization, community participation in decision-making and a merit-based recruitment system, the Ministry is in the process of setting up a policy formulation unit supported by UNDP, UNESCO and the World Bank.

27. To prepare for a unified curriculum, additions to the present Jordanian and Egyptian curricula, followed in the West Bank and Gaza Strip respectively, have been introduced in areas such as Arabic, history and civic education, to overcome the lack of Palestinian specificity. A Curriculum Development Centre was established with the assistance of UNESCO, but it is estimated that the Centre will need five years to produce a new generation of textbooks, at a cost of about \$5 million. Pre-service and in-service teacher training will be undertaken to prepare teachers for the new curriculum.

28. New technical colleges are required and schools need to be rehabilitated and upgraded with modern equipment and laboratories. The development of an Educational Management of Information System (EMIS) is a prerequisite for medium- and long-term planning and policy formulation, and is being established with the assistance of UNICEF. The imbalance between enrolment in universities and technical and community colleges needs to be addressed and the linkage between higher education and economic and social needs should be strengthened.

29. The social, emotional and cognitive development needs of young children need to be accorded greater resources and addressed more systematically. Only an estimated 20 to 30 per cent of children aged 3 to 5 attend kindergarten, and unified standards of supervision are lacking. In non-formal education, priority areas for action identified by the Ministry of Youth and Sports aim at

supporting training programmes to develop young people's life skills and promote their involvement in community development.

#### 4. Integrated United Nations approach

30. The peace process has expanded the possibilities for closer cooperation between the United Nations and the Palestinian Authority in the development and delivery of educational services. Major achievements so far have been the promotion of qualitative educational development and building institutional capacity in the Ministry of Education. However, in an effort to move away from emergency interventions towards long-term institution-building, all Palestinian Authority bodies concerned with educational development are in need of further United Nations assistance. Although the peace process is expected to improve economic development in the area, current sources of revenue to finance basic services are still insufficient. Since education accounts for the greatest share of the Palestinian Authority budget, it is particularly vulnerable to financial shortfalls.

31. The overall challenge for the United Nations is to shape a coherent programme, a set of complementary interventions, leading to the improvement and growth of the educational system. Defining complementary roles among United Nations organizations is a priority, so as to ensure that the Palestinian Authority receives the maximum external assistance. Pilot projects undertaken with the support of United Nations bodies and non-governmental organizations should be evaluated so that achievements can be applied on a larger scale and on a long-term sustainable basis. United Nations agencies should coordinate among ministries, non-governmental organizations and academic institutions to ensure maximum intersectoral cooperation. Above all, the United Nations programme should be integrated within the framework of the five-year master plan for education, currently being prepared by the Ministry of Education.

32. Through participation in the Local Aid Coordination Committee sectoral working group on education, UNDP will continue to act upon the priorities set by the Ministry of Education. The ongoing project for rehabilitating 18 schools in rural areas of the West Bank will be considerably expanded to include the construction or renovation of additional classrooms, especially targeting the female rural population.

33. Other UNDP educational initiatives are based on its overall Gender in Development Programme, where a two-fold approach has been developed: (a) upstream interventions aimed at enhancing advocacy through a series of policy-level initiatives in support of governmental bodies; (b) downstream interventions to tackle the constraints facing women through initiatives focusing on poverty elimination. A UNDP/United Nations Volunteers (UNV) project aimed at reintegrating youth into civil society focuses on strengthening community-based youth clubs, developing a plan for the institution of a youth council and conducting an assessment of the hopes, skills and needs of young people. UNDP is also developing a programme of intervention in the agricultural education sector to be implemented in 1997.

34. UNESCO will continue to cooperate with the Palestinian Authority in improving educational management, through its regular programme, which provides access to a wide variety of services. UNESCO will support an improved programme in science and mathematics teaching and the creation of a curriculum that is relevant to the specific history, needs and aspirations of the Palestinian people. UNESCO also supports a programme of remedial education for underachieving pupils and for young people who have left the school system without realizing their full potential.

35. UNICEF has been in the forefront of promoting the "software" side of development, emphasizing its human and social dimensions and highlighting its global strategy "First Call for Children", under the local theme "Putting our Children First", and through the joint Palestinian Authority/UNICEF National Programme of Action. The educational component of the Programme embraces early childhood development, primary education and youth and community development.

36. UNRWA requires an annual budget of \$65 million to cover its general education programme in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and to ensure access to basic education for all eligible refugee children. UNRWA will promote community involvement in financing education and, where possible, in formulating education policies and priorities. Upgrading of staff skills at all levels remains an important goal, and UNRWA will seek to increase the present two-year teacher training programme to four years. The teaching programme in UNRWA vocational and technical centres will be strengthened.

37. Harmonization between the UNRWA Education Department and the Ministry of Education is taking place at all levels. Specific activities include accreditation of the UNRWA Education Sciences Facility, the introduction of uniform examinations for community colleges and the joint revision of a study plan for vocational training. UNRWA is also cooperating with the Ministry of Education in developing new curricula and textbooks.

38. ILO will continue to assist the Palestinian Authority in developing and strengthening technical training institutions. In particular, ILO will expand vocational education and training projects within the framework of its ongoing activities, such as the programme for the reintegration of ex-detainees, and capacity-building projects for the Ministry of Labour and workers and employers organizations. ILO has also been requested to identify needs and priorities concerning the development of three technical colleges.

39. In 1997, WFP will identify potential partners among non-governmental organizations focusing on women's activities in education. WFP is also considering food assistance as a support for youth summer camps, in collaboration with UNICEF.

## B. United Nations assistance in employment generation

### 1. Background

40. High unemployment and underemployment levels in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip constitute an immediate social and economic challenge to the development

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efforts of the Palestinian Authority. Large-scale unemployment and underemployment cause severe damage to Palestinian society and threaten political stability. There are an estimated 20,000 new job seekers each year in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. With one of the world's highest labour force growth rates (nearly 4 per cent), and with nearly half the population under 15 years of age, the Palestinian economy is unable to absorb many of those presently unemployed and is unlikely to accommodate the expected increase in the number of job-seekers in the years ahead. In addition, many of those denied access to the Israeli labour market cannot find work at home. The dependent nature of the Palestinian economy has also limited employment creation and growth. The industrial sector is relatively small (contributing less than 8 per cent of gross domestic product) and most industrial and service sector activities are in the small-scale production and wholesale/retail trades. Major sources of employment are the agriculture and construction sectors. Given continuing economic unpredictability and the lack of an adequate basic infrastructure, large-scale domestic and foreign investment has not been forthcoming.

41. In the first labour force survey conducted by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics in October 1995 with the assistance of ILO, the rate of open unemployment was revealed as 13 per cent in the West Bank and 31 per cent in the Gaza Strip, with an additional 20 per cent registered as underemployed in the two areas. Owing to border closures, Palestinian employment in Israel has fluctuated considerably, decreasing from a daily average of 116,000 in 1992 to 53,000 in 1994 and 29,500 in 1995. The figures had increased to approximately 70,000 in the first two months of 1996, prior to the wave of suicide attacks beginning in late February. The subsequent closure effectively drastically reduced Palestinian employment in Israel: following the gradual easing of the closure, figures had returned to approximately 10,000 by the end of May 1996. At the end of 1995, the Palestinian Authority, with the assistance of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), projected that during 1996, the unemployment rate would be approximately 23 per cent. As a result of the extended closure, the Palestinian Authority and IMF have revised these projections. Depending on the rate at which trade flows return to pre-closure levels and the possibility of labourers returning to their work in Israel, revised projections are that unemployment may average 31 per cent in 1996.

## 2. Assistance provided

42. The Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction (PECDAR), UNDP and UNRWA, are the principal implementing agencies for projects specifically addressing the problem of unemployment, and their management capacity has expanded considerably in the last year. Under its Peace Implementation Programme (PIP I and II), UNRWA has received over \$146 million, primarily for the implementation of small-scale infrastructural projects in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Projects funded during the initial phase of the UNRWA employment generation programme will be completed during 1996. Progress has been hampered by extended closures, limiting the import of construction materials. However, technical assistance to contractors and other measures designed to increase labour intensity have helped to alleviate this situation.



43. In 1995, UNDP implemented projects amounting to \$20 million, up from \$8 million in 1994, for projects using labour-intensive methods and designed specifically to address the unemployment problem. UNDP is also implementing a portfolio of small infrastructure projects amounting to over \$80 million in both the West Bank and Gaza Strip. UNDP received funding for programmes totalling over \$28 million, which are being co-implemented with PECDAR, Palestinian Authority ministries, municipalities and village councils. In spite of numerous closures, UNDP clean-up, infrastructural rehabilitation and neighbourhood transformation projects have been instrumental in generating employment and improving municipal and social infrastructures.

44. ILO technical missions, in coordination with the Palestinian Authority, have devised strategies to address the unemployment issue and introduce labour-intensive works programmes. ILO is also undertaking the following ongoing employment-related activities: the reintegration, through employment, of ex-detainees; assistance to the Ministry of Labour in the development of labour policy and legislation; capacity building for the Federation of Palestinian Chambers of Commerce and the Palestinian Trade Union Federation; an income-generating programme for the disabled through the manufacture and maintenance of wheel chairs; assistance to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, including a regular labour force survey; assistance to small enterprise development; a programme to train contractors; and technical assistance, including the preparation of a strategy paper for labour-intensive infrastructure development.

45. Following three fact-finding missions, UNESCO has proposed setting up a programme, employing both specialists and unskilled workers, to safeguard historical sites and monuments in Jericho, Gaza, Hebron and Bethlehem. UNESCO also elaborated a programme to create multipurpose community resource centres in the municipalities of Gaza and Nablus, to include training for women and young people, as well as cultural and informational activities. A centre for the promotion of employment in the handicrafts industry is also planned.

### 3. Main development needs

46. Employment generation activities supported by the United Nations and the World Bank, in partnership with bilateral donors, have been largely confined to the Gaza Strip, the first major area to come under Palestinian self-rule. However, despite the substantial resources made available by the international community, the unemployment rate in the Gaza Strip remains high, at times surpassing 50 per cent, and is exacerbated by frequent and prolonged security closures. The need to rehabilitate deteriorated infrastructure has provided opportunities for productive employment in the construction sector based on labour-intensive methods. With the extension, in late 1995, of Palestinian self-rule to major towns and surrounding areas in the West Bank, the Palestinian Authority, the United Nations, the World Bank and donors are in agreement that the emergency employment generation programmes should be extended to that region.

47. United Nations agencies should assist the Palestinian Authority in formulating a clearly defined employment strategy. The sectoral working groups

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of the Local Aid Coordination Committee should incorporate, whenever possible, labour-intensive methods in the implementation of their projects. However, the need to address the present crisis should not obscure the fact that unemployment is a structural problem requiring long-term solutions. As part of the development of a job-creation strategy for the West Bank and Gaza Strip, concrete measures must be taken that encompass a combination of policy instruments at both macro- and micro-levels including employment services, training, the development of small and medium-sized enterprises, the establishment of a social safety net mechanism, social security, and local and regional cooperation in labour migration.

48. In a situation of limited institutional capacity and resources, immediate attention must be given to integrating employment-generating projects into a comprehensive and coordinated Palestinian employment programme. As identified by the Ministry of Labour, this programme should combine both long-term policies and short-term programmes to address some of the immediate symptoms of unemployment. All components must aim at closing the employment gap and producing income-earning opportunities for all, including the long-term unemployed. To be effective, the programme should be developed as an integral strategy embracing employment generation, private sector development and institution building. While the generation of productive employment is the main priority of the programme, it should also strengthen the policy planning and monitoring capacity of the Palestinian Authority, in particular the Ministry of Labour.

49. In its initial phase, priority components of the Palestinian employment programme should include strengthening the Ministry of Labour's capacity to formulate, implement and coordinate the programme, while simultaneously expanding the number and scope of labour-intensive infrastructure projects and enhancing the labour content of such projects. Training for small-scale contractors should be provided to enhance their capacity to undertake labour-based projects. Small-scale income generating projects targeting women, youth and the disabled should be developed, as should self-employment and small business support schemes. The expansion and improvement of vocational training should also be a priority. The collection, analysis and dissemination of labour statistics and labour market information should be strengthened in order to monitor changes in the labour market. UNDP will support the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and other institutions in producing statistics, including monitoring the impact of unemployment on women.

#### 4. Integrated United Nations approach

50. The sectoral working group on employment generation, following the successful experience gained in the Gaza Strip during 1995, has identified a series of priority projects for the West Bank. Since November 1995, the working group has been cooperating with municipalities and village councils to identify new priority project proposals with a high labour content, targeting short-term development needs. The main priority continues to be to support, through capacity-building, the under-utilized implementation capacity of municipalities, village councils and the technical departments of key ministries, through joint implementation modalities between United Nations agencies and Palestinian

institutions. On-the-job training will continue to be provided for project management, the planning of high labour-content infrastructure activities and the introduction of transparent and accountable methods of project implementation. As in the past, all projects have been designed to generate short-term direct and indirect employment opportunities, to demonstrate a rapid and visible impact and to improve living conditions. The sectoral working group coordinates its activities with the Palestinian Authority and with donors to avoid duplication or the inclusion of projects already under active funding consideration. The projects comply with demands for transparency and accountability as well as rapid implementation.

51. The United Nations strategy should aim at the creation of a flexible "rolling programme" whereby, as one set of projects is under implementation, a new set is being identified and planned, thus permitting uninterrupted continuation. Such a programme can be adjusted to meet the changing employment levels in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

52. In order to implement the United Nations strategy, it will be necessary to strengthen further the implementing capacity of Palestinian Authority institutions. UNDP, UNRWA and the World Bank are presently assisting Palestinian Authority implementing agencies, municipalities and village councils in enhancing their capacity to carry out infrastructure works.

53. UNDP, as co-secretariat to the sectoral working group on employment generation, will continue to participate in identifying new labour-intensive programmes. UNDP will also provide implementing agencies with reporting and monitoring services and assist in selecting consultants and sub-contractors, screening contracts, and procurement and import services. Through its engineering unit, UNDP will support the preparation, design and implementation of projects by providing expertise in the appraisal of proposals and the design of facilities (either directly or through sub-contracts with architectural firms). UNDP will also provide assistance in obtaining building permits, tendering documents and contracts and selecting construction firms and supervising construction. UNDP will continue to assess priority investment needs in the region and identify co-financing mechanisms.

54. UNRWA will continue to address the most pressing infrastructural needs of the Palestinian Authority through its Peace Implementation Programme. Projects include the rehabilitation, replacement and construction of schools and health facilities, as well as further investment in the UNRWA shelter rehabilitation and income generation programmes. UNRWA has a substantial implementation capacity, staffed mainly by Palestinians, which can be further expanded, funds permitting. The large number of projects that it is currently implementing contributes significantly to the alleviation of unemployment. The UNRWA income generation programme, which runs a revolving loan programme in support of small enterprises, also targets job creation as a priority in its project development.

55. ILO, as co-secretariat of the sectoral working group on employment generation, can provide training to Palestinian Authority staff, small and medium-sized contractors, consultants and workers. This approach could be combined with related programmes in employment policy, employment services, labour administration and vocational training. In addition, ILO will continue

to play an active role in assisting the Palestinian Authority in designing income generation activities for disadvantaged groups, including ex-detainees, disabled persons and women.

56. In the long term, sustainable employment will be generated mainly by the private sector. Recently, the Government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority reached a general agreement on the need for a programme of border industrial zones to attract foreign investment and create employment opportunities. The United Nations agencies with particular expertise in this field, the Economic and Social Council for Western Asia (ESCWA), the International Trade Centre UNCTAD/GATT (ITC), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and others, should continue to provide technical assistance to Palestinian Authority agencies to implement this initiative, in close coordination with the World Bank.

### C. United Nations assistance in health

#### 1. Background

57. The Palestinian Authority assumed overall responsibility for health in the Gaza Strip and Jericho in May 1994, and the remainder of the West Bank in December 1994. Several factors hindered the development of the sector prior to this, the most significant being the lack of involvement of Palestinians in decision-making regarding their own health system. With the creation of a Ministry of Health, health matters are being addressed with reference to the needs and expectations of the local population. The Palestinian Authority has made commendable progress in implementing its Interim Action Plan, based on the National Health Plan, which was developed in consultation with Palestinian health professionals. The achievements of the Palestinian Authority during its first year of operation included the setting up of the organizational structure of the Ministry of Health, the development of a number of sectoral priorities and policies, and steps to address the sector's requirements in the area of human resources and basic needs.

58. By mid-year 1996, the population of the West Bank and Gaza Strip was 2.468 million, as estimated by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. Life expectancy is 70 years for males and 73.5 for females. The total fertility rate is estimated to be 7.44 children per woman in the Gaza Strip and 5.61 children per woman in the West Bank. Health indicators, especially the infant and child mortality rates, resemble those of other countries in the Middle East and those of similar economic backgrounds. The estimated infant mortality rate in 1995 was 32 per 1,000 in Gaza and 25 per 1,000 in the West Bank. The major causes of infant mortality are low birth weight and acute respiratory tract infections. Preventable diseases are under control owing to an expanded programme of immunization. The causes of morbidity and mortality in the adult population resemble those of societies in transition, with non-communicable diseases on the increase and preventable infectious diseases on the decline.

59. There are 24 hospitals, of which 6 are operated by the Ministry of Health and the remainder by non-governmental organizations and UNRWA. There are

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1.1 hospital beds per 1,000 people. In 1992, there were 467 primary health care facilities. The number of general practitioners is 1 per 5,000 population; for nurses the figure is 1 per 1,800. There is geographical disparity in terms of health facilities and personnel, with a tendency to favour urban centres in general, and Jerusalem in particular.

## 2. Assistance provided

60. Following the signing of the Declaration of Principles in September 1993, the main priority of United Nations agencies was to meet urgent sectoral needs in the transitional phase and to plan for long-term sustainable development. United Nations agencies, in collaboration with the Palestinian Authority and the donor community, identified and planned priority interventions for the rehabilitation of the health infrastructure. These interventions, aimed primarily at building, renovating and expanding a number of health facilities, also benefited the local economy. United Nations organizations played a primary role in the implementation of such projects, with their technical expertise and experience on the ground enabling them to initiate projects in a relatively short time.

61. The process of transferring expertise and developing human resources was also facilitated. The United Nations played a vital role in assisting the Palestinian Health Authority in the area of organization and planning. Projects on the management and organization of health care were undertaken by the Ministry of Health, with support from UNICEF and the World Bank. United Nations agencies also extended assistance in a number of areas, including support for the expanded programme of immunization, an insurance scheme, the development of a National Essential Drug Programme, the control of acute respiratory infections and diarrhoeal diseases and support for maternal health and reproductive health.

62. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has proposed a manpower development project for the Palestinian Authority to provide training for physicians and technicians in the medical fields relevant to the mandate of the agency. In this context, IAEA has sponsored two Palestinian professionals.

63. UNDP is completing a project of renovation and expansion of West Bank hospitals, in Beit Jala, Hebron and Nablus. In coordination with PECJAR, UNDP has implemented the rehabilitation/construction of six clinics and six hospital wards in Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis, Shifa Hospital and the Psychiatric Hospital in the Gaza Strip. UNDP, through its Gender Development Programme, supported the Palestinian Coalition for Women's Health in improving the provision of women's health services. The UNDP Local Rural Development Programme, which operates in the northern West Bank, has trained 11 rural women as community health workers.

64. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) first extended assistance in 1987 in cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO). Two maternal and child health/family planning projects, implemented by UNRWA in coordination with local Palestinian non-governmental organizations, made considerable progress in improving the quality of antenatal care and providing postnatal care. In 1995, the Women's Centre for Reproductive Health Care was established in Bureij camp

to extend information, education and counselling on reproductive health. Activities are carried out in coordination with the Ministry of Health and UNRWA health centres. UNFPA is considering support for the establishment of a similar centre in Gaza City. Also in 1995, in response to a request by the Ministry of Health, UNFPA in collaboration with WHO and UNRWA, fielded a needs assessment and strategic planning mission for women's health and development. Under the umbrella of the Pan-Arab Project for Child Development, UNFPA is also considering supporting a reproductive health module to be integrated into the UNICEF multiple indicator cluster survey planned for 1996. In addition, UNFPA is finalizing an overall programme of assistance to the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza Strip for the period 1996-1999.

65. UNICEF aims to improve the quality of life of Palestinian children and women through support for maternal and child health programmes and through appropriate primary health care services. UNICEF programmes emphasize the importance of complementarity with the Ministry of Health, other United Nations bodies and non-governmental organizations in the field of development, community awareness and intersectoral cooperation. This strategy is applied to all the areas within the organization's concern: the expanded programme of immunization, control of diarrhoeal disease, acute respiratory infection, maternal health, the promotion of breast-feeding and the development of a health service management unit. A multiple indicator cluster survey is being implemented that will generate a database on essential indicators, especially women's and children's health.

66. UNRWA continues to maintain and upgrade its medical infrastructure at the primary care level. In both the West Bank and Gaza Strip, UNRWA offers general primary health care, mother and child care, dental care and a range of specialist services. UNRWA operates 34 health centres in the West Bank and 17 in the Gaza Strip. In addition, UNRWA subsidizes 50 out of 85 beds at Ahli Arab Hospital in the Gaza Strip and is in the process of completing the construction of the 232-bed European Hospital near Khan Younis. UNRWA also provides refugees with access to hospital services at the secondary and tertiary level, including the UNRWA hospital in Qalqilia. The Agency's regular health budget for 1995 was \$14.6 million for the West Bank and \$14.7 million for the Gaza Strip.

67. Under the Agency's Peace Implementation Programme, phase I (PIP I), UNRWA launched a large number of health-related projects, including the maintenance and construction of UNRWA and Palestinian Authority clinics and the procurement and supply of medical equipment, together with a number of interventions in the field of environmental health. Building on the success of the first phase, UNRWA launched PIP II in September 1994. This entailed a heightened focus on environmental health, and funding was received for a number of sewerage and drainage projects in Deir el-Balah and Beach Camp in the Gaza Strip. In the West Bank, funds were allocated for the construction of a public health laboratory and the completion of a sewerage system in Tulkarm. Following a tripartite evaluation by UNFPA, UNRWA and the Ministry of Health of the UNRWA expanded maternal health project in the Gaza Strip, a strategic plan and operational framework for a sustainable women's health programme was developed in the autumn of 1995. UNRWA efforts also went into the improvement of maternal health services with particular emphasis on the training of staff of UNRWA, the Ministry of Health and non-governmental organizations.

68. UNRWA also maintains a high level of coordination and harmonization of health policies and services with the Ministry of Health, with the aim of facilitating a smooth handover of the UNRWA health care system. UNRWA conducts close consultations with the Ministry of Health on all health-related matters, to identify areas where resources can be shared. A high-level Ministry of Health and UNRWA policy committee on the European Gaza Hospital was established to discuss the future management of the facility. UNRWA will hand over a newly constructed primary health care clinic in the West Bank to the Ministry of Health.

69. WFP activities in the Gaza Strip presently target 6,600 households registered by the Ministry of Social Affairs as hardship cases, the majority of which consist of women heads of household with large numbers of dependants. WFP food assistance is provided to complement the families' social entitlement package of a cash subsidy and health insurance. WFP is paying special attention to primary health care and is supporting two year-long projects for pregnant women, nursing mothers and pre-school children. WFP food aid is distributed as take-home family rations to poor women to encourage them to visit clinics and maternal child health centres operated by local non-governmental organizations. A total of 1,000 women and their children are benefiting from these projects.

70. In 1997, WFP will increase its level of assistance to hardship cases registered in the Ministry of Social Affairs safety net programme. Women heads of households and their daughters will be provided with direct counselling on health and nutrition-related subjects and trained in first aid. WFP is also exploring the possibility of collaborating with local non-governmental organizations in support of community-based, health-related interventions. Another proposal being considered is to provide food assistance as a budgetary support to public sector hospitals.

71. WHO, at the request of the Ministry of Health, provided the Ministry of Health with direct financial assistance and fielded several assessment missions. This assistance permitted the Ministry of Health to establish a number of units to develop strategic plans for intersectoral coordination and national health planning. Many of these units were subsequently absorbed by the Ministry of Health. WHO technical support to the Ministry of Health included the establishment of a plan for the regular supply and rational use of drugs. WHO is also providing assistance to the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture in the development of a zoonotic disease policy. A workshop on zoonotic diseases was organized as a prelude to an agreement on a common policy. Other technical assistance included fielding a joint UNDP/UNICEF/WHO mission to formulate project proposals for the prevention of hearing impairment and the improvement of nutrition and mother and child health, under the auspices of the IMPACT (International Initiative Against Avoidable Disablement) scheme.

72. WHO also rehabilitated and equipped four health facilities in the Gaza Strip and provided the centres with basic medical equipment. A supply of medicine and vaccines to cover needs over a six-month period was provided for all government health facilities. Development began on the Khan Younis Rehabilitation Centre, which will provide physiotherapy services to the southern sector of the Gaza Strip. As part of the same project, WHO provided equipment

for a number of secondary health care facilities and the public health laboratory in the Gaza Strip.

73. WHO also financed the establishment of a Continuing Education Centre and a Public Health Training Centre in Gaza, and organized a total of 13 courses at the same facilities. Other courses covered research skills, management skills, health management information systems, public health laboratory technology, as well as a course for ambulance attendants and a cardiac course for nurses. WHO also organized a workshop, attended by over 300 participants, for the development of quality control norms in health service delivery.

74. In addition, WHO awarded several fellowships to senior Palestinian employees of the Ministry of Health and is collaborating with Birzeit University in developing a diploma course in primary health care. Funding for research was provided to various Palestinian institutions, including Al Quds University, which is carrying out a study on the occurrence of the B-Thalassaemia trait in Palestinian students and is providing counselling on the disease.

### 3. Main development needs

75. The fragmentation of health services has been a limiting factor in the development of an integrated, efficient health system. In addition to the Ministry of Health, active providers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip include UNRWA, non-governmental organizations and the private sector, with varying policies, objectives and interests. The introduction of strategic planning and a comprehensive system to regulate, monitor, evaluate and harmonize services remain an important objective.

76. The health system inherited by the Ministry of Health, has not yet been reoriented to the comprehensive approach to primary health care envisaged in the National Health Plan. The integration of preventive and promotive strategies in the curative services is still needed. The development and implementation of clearer health policies and a major reorientation of the system are essential for the future. A more comprehensive approach to women's health also needs to be developed.

77. There are discrepancies between the formal training and work experience of health staff, and the functions they are required to perform. The training, work experience and medical background of health managers also present obstacles to the implementation of appropriately oriented health policies. There is also a need for a comprehensive and cohesive revision of health legislation, as existing legislation consists of inherited Ottoman, British, Egyptian and Jordanian laws and Israeli Civil Administration orders, which reflect neither recent trends and developments in health, nor the policy choices made by the Palestinian Authority.

### 4. Integrated United Nations approach

78. United Nations support for the Palestinian Authority in the initial phase of the transition period has focused primarily on infrastructural development



and meeting basic recurrent costs. However, with the increasing efficiency of Palestinian institutions, the focus of the United Nations and donors should now shift to the transfer of technical expertise and the development of human resources. The United Nations approach is based on the mandates of the respective organizations and on the recommendations of a number of recent United Nations conferences. Women should be empowered to become decision-makers in their own right and influence the health policy-making process. Above all, the United Nations strategy in the health sector should be based on the Palestinian Authority's National Health Plan and Interim Action Plan.

79. The strategies adopted by the United Nations in 1995 have proved their efficacy and are still valid for the next phase of the development effort. These focus on providing technical support and contributing to primary health care infrastructural projects; strengthening and developing essential health services, especially reproductive health and family planning; facilitating coordination between United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations and bilateral bodies; advising on institutional policies, with particular reference to gender-related issues; assisting in developing a system for collecting gender-disaggregated health sector data, as part of a health management information system; strengthening the capacity of the Ministry of Health to manage the overall health system; and assisting in the formulation of policies and strategies for human resources development.

80. The United Nations approach should adopt certain guiding principles. Strategies should be cross-sectoral and complement the efforts of other United Nations agencies, as well as the Palestinian Authority. The ongoing harmonization of policies between the two main providers, UNRWA and the Ministry of Health, should be extended to include non-governmental organizations and the private sector. Approaches developed in other countries provide the United Nations with a range of strategic options to make interventions more cost effective. Such an approach will reduce expenditure on secondary and tertiary health facilities, specialist training and other costly curative interventions in favour of preventive and promotive activities, local preferences and sustainability.

81. Improved management through the introduction of continuous training, the decentralization of administrative and budgetary authorities and the contracting of services plays a major role in strengthening the health system. United Nations agencies should assist the Ministry of Health in rationalizing the health insurance scheme and promoting initiatives aimed at increasing popular involvement in sustaining the health system. The United Nations should also assist the Ministry of Health in orienting the health system towards primary health care, as outlined in the National Health Plan. The United Nations should also stress the importance of administrative and financial decentralization to increase the relevance of health services to local needs.

D. United Nations assistance in infrastructure

1. Background

82. Infrastructure development is intimately related to the development of every other economic and social sector. Roads, water and sanitation, electricity and communication systems, hospitals and schools all constitute the foundation for the development of education, health care, industry, business and agriculture.

83. Despite the assistance provided thus far for housing, as well as the recent strong growth in private sector activity, the sector remains underdeveloped. The number of units constructed in the past few years falls well short of the present need of 40,000 housing units for the West Bank and Gaza Strip, as estimated by the Ministry of Housing in 1995.

84. Negotiations between the Palestinian Authority and donor countries concerning the construction of an airport and sea port progressed during 1995. An airport in the Rafah area, in the southern part of the Gaza Strip, is under construction, and the Palestinian Authority expects that it will become operational by late 1996. Although a number of studies relating to urban transportation planning have been conducted, the land transportation system is underdeveloped. Urban and rural roads are in an advanced state of disrepair and present a significant obstacle to economic development.

85. Although electricity demand for both domestic and industrial use continues to increase, supply remains static. Supply may soon increase owing to the involvement of the private sector and donors interested in assisting in the construction of a power generator in the Gaza Strip. Existing telecommunications systems are also unable to satisfy growing public demand. The private sector is expected to become involved in this area through the recently established Palestinian Telecommunications Company, a public share holding company established to provide communications services to the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

86. The Ministry of Health intends to implement the recommendations of its Hospital Master Plan for the extension and upgrading of existing health facilities and the construction of new hospitals. The Ministry of Education and Higher Education has placed the rehabilitation and development of its material resources - the construction, upgrading and equipping of educational facilities - at the top of its priorities. The Ministry is targeting deprived rural areas and creating facilities specifically for girls.

87. The most significant development in the water sector during 1995 was the establishment of the Palestinian Water Authority (PWA), which assumed responsibility for coordinating activities in this sector and for establishing priority investment and technical assistance needs. However, waste water disposal remains a problem. Sewage treatment plants, where they exist, are inadequate and require extensive rehabilitation and maintenance. Responsibility remains with the municipalities. No specialized authority has yet been established to ensure a systematic approach to the improvement of the sector or to prioritize investment needs.

88. The agricultural sector, a mainstay of the Palestinian economy and a major source of employment, faces several constraints. Access to natural resources remains restricted, physical infrastructure is inadequate and modern services and marketing facilities are lacking. In addition, the agricultural sector needs further assistance to address urgent needs in agricultural development, planning and policy-making.

## 2. Assistance provided

89. Approximately 70 per cent of the budget of UNDP for the occupied territories during 1995 and early 1996 was expended in the education, health, housing, sanitation and water sectors. Projects consist of an integrated package of capital assistance, training and technical assistance, with capital assistance accounting for 80 per cent of the programme. Whenever possible, construction activities include labour-intensive techniques. The ongoing employment generation programme, supported by UNDP, combines the objectives of improving service and basic infrastructure with creating job opportunities. Innovative project implementation arrangements have been adopted in order to ensure the full participation of Palestinian institutions.

90. In the water sector, UNDP provided assistance to seven villages in 1995. Projects ranged from the rehabilitation of existing water supply and distribution systems to the construction of new systems and the training of local council technical staff in operation and maintenance. In urban areas, UNDP has completed the rehabilitation of part of the Tulkarm water system, as well as the implementation of three other projects in Rafah, Ramallah and Nablus. One ongoing project involves the preparation of a water master plan for Khan Younis city and refugee camp, and the rehabilitation and upgrading of the existing system. In addition, two related projects in the Hebron District are under implementation. Following the signing of the Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, a new assistance programme was developed by UNDP to respond to Palestinian needs, consistent with annex III, appendix 1, article 40, of the Agreement on water. UNDP will design and construct the transmission line from a new well, funded by the Government of Israel, to the residential areas of Jenin City.

91. At the institutional level, UNDP has been supporting the management of water resources through the establishment of the Water Resources Action Program (WRAP) in April 1994. WRAP is now almost fully integrated into PWA and the project is entering into its second phase, which involves support for the formulation and implementation of a PWA policy. Participation in the development of a Palestinian strategy on waste water treatment and reuse is also a high priority for UNDP.

92. UNDP initiated a project in 1995 to rehabilitate a school and cultural complex in the city of Jericho to serve the needs of approximately 2,000 students. UNDP also launched a comprehensive programme for the rehabilitation of 18 schools in West Bank rural communities and the premises of the Ministry of Education in Ramallah. The programme, which targets the rural female population, is expected to expand in 1997. As part of the Employment Generation

Programme, UNDP, in cooperation with PECDAR, has undertaken minor infrastructure works in 19 educational facilities throughout the Gaza Strip.

93. UNDP continued its upgrading and renovation of Beit Jala Hospital near Bethlehem. Work is expected to be completed in 1996. Construction activities to expand the Women's Union Hospital in Nablus was completed, and the two-storey annex will accommodate three operating theatres and intensive care units. In addition, UNDP, in coordination with PECDAR, has rehabilitated or constructed six clinics and six hospital wards for Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis and the Shifa Hospital and Psychiatric Hospital in Gaza City. These projects form part of the Employment Generation Programme funded by the Government of Sweden. UNDP has also procured hospital equipment and supplies for Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis and for Shifa Hospital in Gaza City.

94. In the agricultural sector, UNDP is revitalizing two Palestinian intermediate-level agricultural training schools at Al-Aroub near Hebron and Beit Hanoun in the Gaza Strip. The aim of the project is to renovate existing physical facilities in both centres through the construction of new classrooms and dormitories and the rehabilitation of model farms. Throughout 1995, UNDP also supported a number of private sector initiatives such as the procurement of equipment for the Ramallah poultry cooperative, as well as supplying additional investments to the Gaza Citrus Plant. UNDP and the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) are supporting a local and rural development programme in the district of Jenin. In addition to the local and rural development programme, UNDP is also supporting a number of village councils in their efforts to be upgraded as municipalities.

95. UNDP is implementing a housing project in Beit Hanoun that will provide 256 housing units for families of the Palestinian police force. Construction commenced in March 1995 and is expected to be completed by the end of 1996.

96. Following the signing of the Declaration of Principles between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization in September 1993, UNRWA established its Peace Implementation Programme (PIP). This programme primarily targeted basic infrastructure projects in the education, health, and social sectors. Following the success of its first phase, PIP II was launched in September 1994. UNRWA prioritized projects under PIP II, emphasizing those which can be implemented immediately and do not add significant recurrent costs and have a large direct labour component. UNRWA maintains a priority short list of projects, focusing mainly on the construction of schools, classrooms and shelters. The primary focus is the continuous strengthening of basic physical infrastructure in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, with the aim of improving refugee living conditions and contributing to employment generation. UNRWA is also preparing for the eventual hand over of its services to the Palestinian Authority.

97. Prior to the establishment of the Palestinian Authority, UNRWA assumed a lead role in planning for sustainable development in the environmental health sector. Since the establishment of the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation and PECDAR and the subsequent strengthening of local capacity within this sector, UNRWA has been coordinating closely with the Palestinian Authority. UNRWA is implementing environmental health projects amounting to \$27 million

under PIP I. Under PIP II, UNRWA received \$17.3 million for projects for the improvement of environmental conditions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and is seeking over \$110 million in donor funding for additional projects.

98. UNRWA is implementing education-related projects, amounting to \$48.3 million, under PIP I and II. The construction of additional schools and classrooms and the replacement of unsuitable premises will enhance the quality of education which the Agency provides to the refugee population. The anticipated return of refugee families will place additional pressure on the Agency's education facilities. UNRWA is still seeking \$85.7 million in funding for education projects under PIP II.

99. UNRWA is implementing health projects amounting to \$50.8 million under its PIP I and II programmes. The focus of the programme is to maintain and upgrade the health infrastructure at the primary level in close coordination with the Palestinian Health Authority. UNRWA is still seeking over \$2 million in donor funding for health-related projects and additional funding for the European Gaza Hospital near Khan Younis, the first new hospital to be built in the Gaza Strip in over 25 years. Since the establishment of PIP, UNRWA has received \$27.4 million in funding for shelter upgrading and reconstruction. Potential beneficiaries are selected on the basis of established socio-economic hardship criteria. The work is carried out by local contractors or on a self-help basis. UNRWA is still seeking \$11 million for the West Bank and \$7 million in funds for Gaza.

100. Following a mission by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), three projects were identified. An ICAO project to support the Palestinian Civil Aviation Authority has been included in the Palestinian Authority's list of priority projects.

101. As a result of various missions by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) during 1995, a study was finalized and a number of priority projects were identified. A training workshop was conducted and several fellowships were awarded to staff in the Ministry of Planning and Telecommunications to participate in regional activities organized by ITU. Following a mission to assess the priority needs of the Ministry of Planning and Telecommunications, ITU formulated a technical assistance programme for 1996-1997. ITU has seconded a senior expert in telecommunications operations and management to the Ministry of Planning and Telecommunications for six months.

102. An International Maritime Organization (IMO) advisory mission visited the Gaza Strip to assess the needs in the maritime sector. As a result, two project profiles were prepared, with a project entitled "Establishment of a maritime administration" being included in the Palestine Authority's Core Investment Programme. Following a Universal Postal Union (UPU) mission in 1995, a number of priorities were identified and two projects formulated. The project entitled "Rehabilitation of the postal services" was also included in the Core Investment Programme.

103. UNESCO activities in the field of educational infrastructure included a project to rehabilitate schools in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. By

January 1996, 17 schools were rehabilitated and furnished. A model kindergarten in Gaza City was also constructed, to serve up to 50 disadvantaged children.

### 3. Main development needs

104. In view of the enormous needs of infrastructural development, the first priority must be the rehabilitation, operation and maintenance of existing physical infrastructure facilities. Simultaneously, sustainable capacity must be developed to manage, operate and maintain these facilities, through the establishment of adequate management systems and structures, on-the-job training and the transfer of skills and knowledge. All capital investments in infrastructure should be combined with appropriate technical assistance packages. In addition, support for future development planning should be coordinated with Palestinian institutions, in particular the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation.

105. Infrastructural requirements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip - in the agriculture, education, health, industry, sanitation and water sectors - are similar in terms of the type of projects needed. However, it is increasingly evident that needs vary between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and that development priorities should be tailored accordingly. Population density, availability of key natural resources, per capita income and urban and agricultural conditions differ between the crowded coastal plain and the less densely populated West Bank. In view of the limited availability of land, a regulated programme of land use is a prerequisite for all other forms of infrastructural development, and such development should incorporate strict guidelines for the protection of the environment and of human resources.

106. Dwindling water resources, the growth of the agricultural sector and a rising population necessitate the creation of efficient water preservation and distribution systems. Palestinian experts in water resource planning and management require assistance in the field of water policy, legislation and management strategies. Closely related to the question of water resources is the issue of waste water disposal and reuse. Inadequate sewage systems and the absence of proper treatment and disposal schemes threaten both the quality of the water supply and public health.

107. The revival of the agricultural sector features prominently in Palestinian development planning. To encourage private investment, the improvement of the legal, regulatory and institutional framework is necessary. Basic agricultural infrastructure - schools, laboratories, quarantine stations, research stations - also requires upgrading.

108. In order for Palestinian industry to develop and become competitive, a proper transportation system and modern electric and telecommunications networks are necessary. Power generation plants, energy planning and information systems, energy efficiency programmes and renewable energy technologies are required. Similarly, the lack of a modern telecommunications network has a negative impact on the ability of Palestinian business and industry to compete.

109. The educational infrastructure requires upgrading, and existing material resources, including classrooms, laboratories, libraries and playgrounds, need rehabilitation and expansion. Rural communities should be targeted, especially those in inaccessible areas and where female pupils are underrepresented.

110. The National Health Plan of the Ministry of Health focuses on the rehabilitation, renovation and expansion of tertiary health care facilities. The first priority is to provide equal access to high quality hospital care. The National Health Plan envisages providing increasing bed capacity in underserved districts of the West Bank. The second priority is the provision of operating theatres and intensive-care equipment.

111. The rate of house construction cannot meet existing needs, especially those of low-income families. Demand will continue to grow, given the high rate of population growth and the expected rise in the number of returnees. The Palestinian Authority is currently devising a strategy to promote private sector financing for housing and to increase the supply of affordable housing for the low-income segment of the population. The main elements of this strategy are the provision of long-term financing and insurance facilities to promote commercial bank financing for housing; the establishment of a housing bank, targeting assistance and subsidies to needy households; the upgrading of infrastructure in low-income neighbourhoods; and legal and regulatory reforms to encourage private sector participation in the development of the housing sector. It is recommended that the Palestinian Authority act as a facilitator in housing provision and a generator of job opportunities.

#### 4. Integrated United Nations approach

112. The primary elements of the United Nations strategy to support the development of the Palestinian Authority efforts in infrastructure are the continued rehabilitation of basic education, health and agriculture, as well as adopting labour intensive techniques in the design and implementation of projects. A realistic assessment of the situation in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip shows that the Palestinian Authority lacks the financial resources to implement and manage major infrastructure projects at this time. The United Nations strategy for infrastructure development should fully support the preliminary statement on the Palestinian development strategy, presented to the Ministerial Conference on Economic Assistance to the Palestinian People in Paris on 9 January 1996.

113. There is an urgent need for both the rehabilitation of existing infrastructure and investment in new strategic facilities, with potential for regional linkages. Although significant progress has been made in the implementation of the World Bank-supported Emergency Rehabilitation Program and other donor-funded programmes, rehabilitation and upgrading is still needed for electricity distribution, existing roads, drainage, water supply and waste water treatment systems, as well as solid waste collection and disposal.

114. The education sector suffered inadequate levels of investment in the past, which the Palestinian Authority's Core Investment Programme is addressing by rehabilitating and expanding basic education facilities and strengthening

educational management. The main priorities are the rehabilitation of existing schools and the construction of new ones to overcome the problem of overcrowding, the upgrading of higher education facilities and establishing art, cultural and recreational institutions. The ongoing UNRWA Peace Implementation Programme is an essential component of the development effort in this sector. The Peace Implementation Programme will also continue to benefit the health sector, as will WHO through its role as secretariat to the sectoral working group on health. This sector faces difficulties owing to the shortage of hospitals, staff and equipment, as a result of the tripling of the West Bank and Gaza Strip population since 1967. Infrastructure is inadequate and there are disparities in the quality of health care services. Priorities include improving the primary health care system and consolidating hospital-based care. The Core Investment Programme focuses on the rehabilitation of existing facilities and the extension of basic health care infrastructure to those areas where needs are most urgent.

115. UNDP will assist the agricultural sector through the development of an investment programme for the revitalization of the research, extension and agricultural training sub-sector. A number of feasibility studies will be developed for priority physical infrastructure needs. These activities will be developed in coordination with the institutional capacity-building support which UNDP will provide to the Ministries of Agriculture and Education, in terms of policy development and strategic planning. In addition, UNDP and UNCDF will continue to support the relevant ministries and local authorities in the area of local planning and financing for development.

#### E. United Nations assistance in institution-building

##### 1. Background

116. The Palestinian Authority assumed responsibility for central administration functions in the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area in May 1994, following the signing of the Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area. The scope of the powers of the Palestinian Authority was extended to certain defined spheres of central government responsibility throughout the West Bank in December 1994. In addition, throughout the latter months of 1995, following the signing of the Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the Palestinian Authority assumed full self-rule and civil administration responsibilities in most West Bank cities and in many towns and villages. The mandate of the Palestinian Authority now covers the majority of the Palestinian population in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, although a much smaller percentage of the actual territory.

117. Palestinian institutions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip comprise three distinct categories: the Palestinian Authority central administration, local government and non-governmental organizations. The central administration has absorbed former employees of the Israeli Civil Administration, staff of the technical and operational departments of the Palestine Liberation Organization, staff from some local non-governmental organizations and individuals from the private sector. A comprehensive manpower development programme is needed, to take into account the different backgrounds and technical capacities of central administration employees.



118. In the area of local government, Palestinian public institutions have existed for decades in the form of village councils, local development councils and municipal administrations. At the non-governmental level, a large number of Palestinian non-governmental organizations, including charitable societies, cooperatives, research centres and community-based organizations, have operated in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Many non-governmental organizations have served - and continue to serve - vital public and quasi-public functions. Support from the United Nations has been provided to, and through, this network of non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations. At all of these administrative levels, it is necessary to develop sustainable institutions that can deliver public services to the Palestinian population in an efficient and effective manner.

## 2. Assistance provided

119. In response to the changes that have occurred since the signing of the 1993 Declaration of Principles, United Nations assistance to institution-building has evolved rapidly, focusing on assisting in the organization and start-up of the Palestinian Authority. The United Nations is assisting Palestinian Authority ministries and institutions to coordinate their activities and formulate central-level policies in different sectors, as well as to build up the Authority's institutional structures.

120. In 1994 and 1995, UNDP responded to the most pressing needs of the Palestinian Authority by providing emergency start-up funding and procurement support to 19 Palestinian Authority ministries and institutions. UNDP also continued its tradition of public sector support at the municipal and local levels, primarily through large-scale infrastructure investments, combined with training and technical assistance. Since early 1995, UNDP has been implementing the TOKTEN Programme (Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals), which has become a key source of short-term technical assistance to the Palestinian Authority. The TOKTEN Programme sponsors the return of expatriate Palestinians to provide policy advisory services, consultancy studies and training to Palestinian Authority ministries, universities, research centres and quasi-public institutions.

121. In a complementary manner, UNV is providing specialists to work within Palestinian Authority ministries for long-term missions (1-2 years), to support policy and strategy formulation, prioritization of needs and identification of project and funding sources. With current UNDP funding, a UNV umbrella project is providing support to the Ministries of Social Affairs, Youth and Sports, Education, and Tourism and Antiquities. The UNV modality is also being utilized in a UNDP project to give support to women's departments in the Ministries of Social Affairs, Youth and Sports, Planning and International Cooperation, and Health. In addition, a team of four UNV specialists, through its White Helmets Initiative, is lending expertise to the Municipality of Gaza in its long-term urban planning process.

122. In 1995, UNDP assisted in the establishment of the interministerial task force for public administration development and public sector management, working closely with the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation.

UNDP sponsored a mission from its Management Development and Governance Division, which helped to set out the priority needs of the Palestinian Authority and made recommendations for a public administration development programme. UNDP has also assisted in the formulation and ongoing implementation of the Palestinian Authority's Public Administration Training Programme for civil servants. In addition, UNDP is supporting the efforts of women's departments within Palestinian Authority ministries to enhance their capacity to integrate gender concerns into the development process. The employment-generating public works programme, developed with assistance from UNDP and donors, is building local institutional capacity in the form of the PECRAR Programme Management Unit in Gaza. Progress in the development of the Programme Management Unit has been central to the development and implementation of infrastructure rehabilitation and construction programmes.

123. UNDP also supported the establishment of the Palestinian Water Authority in 1995, through technical and advisory support provided through the Water Resources Action Programme. In the field of agriculture, UNDP has commissioned the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to undertake a formulation mission to develop an institution-building programme to strengthen the capacities of the Ministry of Agriculture in policy formulation and planning.

124. UNRWA, through its long history of assistance to Palestinian refugees, plays a large role in the West Bank and Gaza Strip public sector, particularly in education, health and social services. UNRWA employs over 5,500 teachers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, who provide primary, preparatory and vocational schooling to 177,000 students. UNRWA offers basic health and social services to over 1.2 million registered refugees, operates approximately 52 out-patient facilities and employs 130 physicians and 1,500 other health care workers. In the Gaza Strip, UNRWA provides monthly in-kind support to almost 100,000 of the poorest refugees. The Agency's activities over the past 45 years have built up substantive local capacity and dramatically improved the Palestinian human resource base. These capacities help set the agenda for institutional development, in particular in the area of public management and administration.

125. The new UNICEF programme of cooperation for 1996-1997 includes a two-fold strategy for the survival, protection and development of children:  
(a) providing emergency relief and rehabilitation services during the transition stage; (b) developing a medium- to long-term capacity-building programme for governmental and non-governmental institutions and for empowering communities. This strategy will focus on developing policies and systems and building institutions to promote the rights of children and women, under the framework of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

126. In 1994-1995, ILO initiated a long-term project for the foundation and development of the Ministry of Labour. ILO assisted the Ministry in integrating offices previously managed by the Israeli Civil Administration. Branch offices of the Ministry of Labour were set up in Gaza and Jericho. ILO also assisted the Ministry in developing labour inspection services and elaborating a labour code. Training of labour market agents and of labour inspectors has already started.

127. In addition, ILO assisted the Ministry of Social Affairs in designing and implementing a programme for the reintegration and rehabilitation of ex-detainees. The Ministry of Social Affairs and ILO are undertaking activities related to vocational rehabilitation. At the request of the Palestinian Authority, ILO formulated a proposal on "A Palestinian employment programme: a medium-term strategy" in 1995, to provide a framework to design policies and programmes for sustainable and productive job creation. The ultimate objective of the Palestine employment programme is to enhance the capacity of the Palestinian Authority to undertake policy and programme planning on employment and labour market issues.

128. In addition, with the assistance of ILO, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics finalized the first Palestinian labour force survey in early 1996. Another ILO project launched at the beginning of 1995 upgraded the equipment of the Federation of Palestinian Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture and provided training and technical expertise. ILO has also supported workers' organizations such as the Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions by promoting trade union rights, enhancing the organizational structure of the Federation and improving trade union management and services.

129. WFP assistance aims to improve the delivery of public services by the Department of Rehabilitation and Relief of the Ministry of Social Welfare. To enhance the skills of 50 social workers within the Ministry, WFP will organize six workshops throughout 1996, focusing on monitoring and data collection techniques and awareness-raising on issues related to gender, nutrition, education, health and environmental sanitation.

130. The Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division of the United Nations Secretariat is developing a project to improve the criminal justice division in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank in order to complement other ongoing projects in this field. The aim is to improve the administration of the criminal justice system by providing assistance in drafting and reviewing laws and building the capacity of criminal justice personnel through training courses.

131. The United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories continues to coordinate bilateral and multilateral training programmes for the Palestinian police force. The main objective has been to gradually transform international training efforts into a longer-term framework to enable the police to undertake its own specialized training. During 1995, the police force programme focused on the need to establish a police academy, to be built in Nablus. Meetings between prospective donors, the Palestinian police and the Mayor of Nablus have been facilitated through the Office of the Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories. In the first half of 1996, more than 550 policemen received training in the following areas: advanced driving, basic forensic science, drug law enforcement, human rights, maintenance of public order, management development and training, and management training for traffic police and women police management. The Office of the Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories provides support services to donors, including the facilitation and briefing of visiting missions and trainers, as well as assisting in the monitoring, follow-up and evaluation of courses. Training courses are designed to meet needs identified by the Palestinian police force and expressed to the international community, through the Local Aid Coordination

Committee sectoral working group on the police, for which the Office serves as secretariat.

132. The Centre for Human Rights of the United Nations Secretariat has secured funding for a two-year project for the strengthening of the rule of law in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. It will be implemented by a project team to be located in Gaza, and will include support for law reform, training and advisory services to police, prison officials, lawyers and judges, as well as technical and financial support for local human rights organizations and the Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizens Rights.

133. WHO assistance has continued to focus mainly on building an infrastructure for primary health care, secondary health care and environmental health, especially in the Gaza Strip. WHO provided resources for the establishment and operation of a number of departments of the Ministry of Health. WHO also responded to the request of the Palestinian Council for Health for financial and other assistance in the following fields: recruitment of staff and the equipping of five units responsible for the transfer of health services to the Palestinian Authority; the establishment of a health data system to serve as the basis for health planning; the design and evaluation of an insurance system; the design of a regulatory framework for health services; and the establishment of priorities for the environmental-health sector.

134. In 1994 and 1995, UNFPA fielded a number of technical advisory missions to assist the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics in formulating a population and housing census project. The project will contribute to building the institutional capabilities of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics through technical assistance from UNFPA and the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis; the recruitment and training of field workers, statisticians and data-processing specialists; and the provision of data-processing and other equipment for collecting and analysing population data. Census data will be collected and analysed by gender to provide the basis for the formulation of specific policies to respond to women's needs. To help build the operational capabilities of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, UNFPA may provide training for its staff and for non-governmental organizations in financial and administrative rules and procedures. These above activities would be implemented as part of the UNFPA Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (1996-1999), which is being finalized.

135. In addition, UNFPA assisted in the establishment of a women's centre for reproductive health care, social assistance, legal counselling and community education in the Bureij refugee camp in the Gaza Strip. The centre was inaugurated in December 1995, and its activities are being implemented by local non-governmental organizations, in coordination with the Ministry of Health and UNRWA. UNFPA is considering support for the establishment of a similar centre in Gaza City. UNFPA is also planning to provide technical assistance and training to the Women's Health and Development Department of the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Social Affairs and women's non-governmental organizations.

136. The activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) focus on institutionalizing gender planning within emerging Palestinian

Authority bodies. The recent activities of UNIFEM included supporting preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, by providing training to Palestinian participants. Since the Conference, UNIFEM has launched follow-up activities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip through a regional project that targets governmental mechanisms and non-governmental organizations to promote the implementation of the platform of action adopted in Beijing. UNIFEM is also providing support for the establishment of a Women in Development Facilitation Unit in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which will endeavour to integrate gender issues into existing donor coordination mechanisms.

137. Following an assessment mission in October 1995, the Department for Development Support and Management Services formulated five project documents, comprising a comprehensive package of assistance to the Palestinian Authority in the area of financial management. The Department also supported the United Nations Seminar on Palestinian Administrative, Managerial and Financial Needs and Challenges, held in June 1995.

138. The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) has developed three project proposals aimed at strengthening the institutional framework of the telecommunications sector: Advisory support to the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications; a telecommunication training centre; and a telecommunication master plan. Other ITU activities in 1995 included assisting the Ministry of Telecommunications in its assessment of priority needs and conducting an organizational development training workshop in November 1995 for telecommunications managers.

139. Following assessment missions, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlement (Habitat) has prepared a project document entitled "Housing policy and projects", to assist the Ministry of Housing in the preparation and formulation of a comprehensive housing policy and implementation strategy, including institutional and regulatory frameworks, land regulations, housing and municipal finance, and monitoring mechanisms.

140. In partnership with the Palestinian Authority, UNESCO has developed project proposals in the fields of education, science, culture and communication. In addition, during 1995-1996, UNESCO undertook the following activities: a human resources project for the Ministry of Education; an international meeting of experts on music culture in the West Bank and Gaza Strip; a training seminar for theatre instructors; and technical assistance and equipment to the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation. In addition, UNESCO will soon be initiating a project to restructure and strengthen the Palestinian News Agency (WAFA).

141. UPU undertook an assessment mission in 1995 and formulated a project to develop the human resources capacity of the Palestinian postal system through training of its staff in management and postal operations.

142. As part of its strategy to build up institutional capabilities in the areas of trade, finance, and related services, UNCTAD fielded an advisory mission to the Ministry of Transport, to identify requirements and elaborate a project of technical cooperation in the development and management of the Gaza commercial sea port. The project foresees technical assistance from UNCTAD, primarily in the establishment of institutional, operational and managerial capacities, and

the necessary legal framework for the proper setting up and functioning of the port.

143. The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), has formulated two projects. The project entitled "Training in public administration" aims to strengthen the capacity of senior officials and institutions in budgeting, financial management, debt management and financial negotiations. Two workshops on financial management were conducted by UNITAR in Gaza and Ramallah in December 1995. The project entitled "Training for establishing a Palestinian Land Information System and Mapping (PALISMAP)" aims to establish a geographic information infrastructure to facilitate access to, and use of, geoinformation and to improve the mapping capabilities of relevant ministries.

144. The strategy of the United Nations Drug Control Programme focuses on a multisectoral approach to coordinate and integrate drug control policies into the broader developmental policies of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The Programme is developing subregional cooperation with neighbouring countries (Jordan, Egypt, Israel). In 1995, in close collaboration with the Palestinian Authority, the Programme prepared the project entitled "Multi-sectoral drug control assistance to the Palestinian Authority", which will provide technical assistance (a) to establish a drug control institutional framework; (b) to reduce the illicit supply of narcotic drugs through improved detection, interdiction and prosecution capacities; and (c) to prevent and reduce drug abuse through improved awareness, treatment and rehabilitation methods. Emphasis will be placed on capacity-building through training in the above areas.

145. ESCWA has assisted in assessing the restructuring and rehabilitation of public agricultural institutions and in assessing the role of non-governmental organizations in the agricultural sector, with an emphasis on agricultural credit institutions. ESCWA also assisted in the rehabilitation and development of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics through training programmes, with an emphasis on new systems for national accounts and the development of gender statistics.

146. UNEP conducted a course in December 1995 to assist the Regional Training Group of the Multilateral Working Group on Water. The aim was to provide participants with an analytical framework on sustainable freshwater use in the Middle East.

147. UNIDO has developed a strategy for technical assistance in private sector development for industry, small- and medium-scale enterprises, human resources development and technology. Within this framework, UNIDO is implementing a project on the integrated development of the building materials and construction industry. This project will provide for a unit to monitor and manage technical cooperation projects, as well as related activities. In 1995, UNIDO undertook several missions aimed at developing projects, including the establishment of the Palestinian Standards Organization, the Palestinian Fashion Design and Technology Development Centre, the Biomedical Equipment Repair and Maintenance Centre and a Plastics Service and Trading Centre. UNIDO is also proposing

technical support to various ministries, the newly established Industrial Associations and the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics.

### 3. Main development needs

148. Institutional building comprises one of the four primary components of the Palestinian Authority's preliminary statement on a Palestinian development strategy, presented in January 1996 at the Ministerial Conference on Economic Assistance to the Palestinian People. As noted in the preliminary statement, the institutional development component aims to achieve the development of a new system of governance, and the building of local capabilities and a competent civil service necessary to implement the economic development strategy.

149. As outlined in the preliminary statement, the Palestinian Authority's institutional development priorities include strengthening the technical, financial and managerial capabilities of municipal governments; building up a legal basis for public administration; strengthening the key central institutions relating to commerce and economic management; ensuring that development projects incorporate institution-building components; ensuring extensive consultations between the central Government, local authorities, the private sector and non-governmental organizations in the implementation of an economic development strategy; creating capacity within Palestinian institutions for research, policy analysis and policy implementation; and ensuring open participation in the decision-making process by involving the public in policy formulation and the design of the development strategy. The United Nations strategy for institution-building will be geared towards responding to these priorities.

### 4. Integrated United Nations approach

150. Owing to the urgency of supporting the initial start-up phase of the Palestinian Authority ministries and institutions, most donor support in the area of institution-building has focused on capital investments and support for recurrent expenditures. Although technical assistance may take longer to bear fruit, it is an essential element in long-term institutional development and a key factor in developing the absorptive capacity of the Palestinian Authority to implement large-scale capital investments.

151. An important focus for the United Nations system will be in the physical infrastructure sector. The United Nations system has the necessary expertise to provide capacity-building technical assistance within selected areas of infrastructure rehabilitation, such as civil aviation, port management, housing, employment-generating public works programmes, telecommunications, hospital and school construction, and the postal service. Another important focus for the United Nations system is in supporting sustainable human and social development through the provision of technical assistance to those Palestinian institutions closely concerned with the delivery of public and social services. The relevant United Nations organizations can provide a broad range of technical assistance, including training and policy advisory support. In addition, technical experts can assist Palestinian Authority ministries in developing and implementing

sectoral gender-sensitive strategies and action plans. Assistance can also be provided to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation capacities of the ministries.

152. United Nations organizations may also assist ministries in establishing data systems and information bases in order to make data available to policy-makers, as well as strengthening institutional capacities in the analysis, dissemination and utilization of such data. United Nations organizations will also continue their support to non-governmental organizations and may help establish appropriate mechanisms for partnership between Palestinian Authority institutions and non-governmental organizations.

153. Another key element of the United Nations strategy for institution-building will be the continuing focus on supporting public sector management and public administration development. The aim of the United Nations system is to support and strengthen the capacities of those Palestinian Authority institutions which play a central role in public administration. The United Nations system will work with relevant Palestinian institutions to assist the Palestinian Authority in other tasks that could be included in an overall Public Administration Development Programme. The United Nations system will continue to support the Palestinian Authority in the ongoing formulation of an overall gender-sensitive training strategy and in the coordination and implementation of training programmes.

154. Priority from the United Nations system should also be given to enhancing the capacity of the Ministry of Labour to formulate, implement, coordinate and monitor a comprehensive Palestinian employment programme. Short-term employment programmes will be designed and implemented under the Palestinian employment programme to alleviate long-term structural unemployment. Support should also be provided to other institutions concerned with labour and employment issues, such as employers' and workers' organizations.

155. The United Nations system will also continue to support the capacity development of local authorities. Technical assistance components will be incorporated into large-scale capital investment projects in order to boost the capacity of local counterpart institutions and strengthen their technical, financial and managerial capabilities. The United Nations system will also support ongoing Palestinian initiatives in decentralized planning and financing for development. In addition, the United Nations will support policy dialogue between the local authorities and Palestinian Authority ministries on issues of local governance and decentralization.

156. Another critical element in ensuring the proper development of public sector institutions is to develop cohesive and equitable legal and judicial frameworks. The Palestinian Authority has stated its intention of establishing a legal reform committee in 1996, which will formulate a phased action plan for legal reform. Owing to the relatively high level of expertise in human rights, legal reform and the rule of law in Palestinian civil society, the United Nations system will support projects that will channel this expertise from the non-governmental sector to the official sector. The United Nations will promote the rationalization and reform of the legal system to conform with international standards, the independent administration of justice, promotion of the rule of



law and training of criminal justice personnel. The legal environment surrounding private sector investment should also receive priority attention.

157. Another aim of the United Nations strategy is to strengthen Palestinian capacity for aid coordination and management. Support from the United Nations can be provided to the Palestinian Authority by a whole range of aid coordination and management processes, such as the project formulation and implementation cycle, the assessment of capital and technical assistance needs, the integration of aid flows into the central planning process and the establishment of relationships with donor institutions.

158. A central objective of United Nations support for institutional development is to facilitate the progressive inclusion of the West Bank and Gaza Strip into regional and subregional spheres. The United Nations system will encourage regional networking, utilizing the established field office network of United Nations organizations throughout the Arab States, as well as the exchange of technical expertise within the region. The utilization of qualified expatriate Palestinian expertise will also be encouraged.

159. Throughout its various activities in support of institution-building, the United Nations system will support and complement the institutional development strategy currently being prepared by the World Bank. The efforts of the United Nations system will aim at shaping a coherent programme of complementary activities leading to the improvement of Palestinian institutional capacities.

#### F. United Nations assistance to private sector development

##### 1. Background

160. The gross domestic product (GDP) of the West Bank and Gaza Strip has been estimated at \$2.6 billion, compared to \$5.2 billion for Jordan and \$65 billion for Israel (indicative figures for 1993). By 1995, the preliminary estimated GDP had grown to \$3.5 billion, according to the Palestinian Authority Ministry of Finance. According to World Bank estimates, the service sector accounts for nearly 50 per cent of GDP; agriculture for less than 30 per cent; construction for 14 per cent; and industry for only 8 per cent. One of the major structural imbalances of the Palestinian economy is its low degree of industrialization when compared to other economies at similar income levels. The private sector has accounted for about 85 per cent on average of the West Bank and Gaza Strip GDP in recent years. This unusually large share of GDP reflected the absence of a well-developed public sector prior to the establishment of the Palestinian Authority in May 1994.

161. The per capita GDP of the West Bank and Gaza Strip is estimated at \$1,700, according to a report prepared by the Palestinian Authority in collaboration with IMF and the World Bank. Although recent figures are fragmented and incomplete, Palestinian Authority estimates suggest that GDP grew by 7.3 per cent in real terms in 1994 but by only 3.5 per cent in 1995. More importantly, the gross national product (GNP), which, in addition to domestic output and income, takes into account income earned outside the West Bank and Gaza Strip, notably in Israel, is estimated to have grown by less than

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3 per cent in real terms during 1994, owing mainly to a loss in employment opportunities for Palestinian workers in Israel. In addition, owing to a further heavy loss in 1995, remittances earned outside the West Bank and Gaza Strip are estimated to have declined further, resulting in a fall of the order of 3 per cent of the GNP in real terms for that year. With a population growth rate of about 4 per cent per annum (excluding immigration), the West Bank and Gaza Strip per capita GNP would have declined in 1995 by nearly 7 per cent.

162. At the end of 1995, the Palestinian Authority, with the assistance of IMF, projected that during 1996, real GDP growth would increase by approximately 5 per cent and that the GNP would grow by 6.2 per cent. As a result of the extended closure that began in February 1996, the Palestinian Authority and IMF have revised these projections. Depending on the rate at which trade flows return to pre-closure levels and the possibility of labourers returning to their work in Israel, revised projections predict a loss of up to \$800 million in GNP over the course of 1996.

163. Years of conflict and instability have created an inhibitive investment environment in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Since the 1970s, private sector investment has been constrained, partially as a result of prolonged security-related closures. Over recent years, 85 per cent of investment has gone into construction, primarily housing, one of the few secure areas of investment open to local investors. According to the World Bank, over 20 per cent of GDP has been invested in the housing sector, with less than 4 per cent invested in productive assets.

## 2. Assistance provided

164. UNDP has supported initiatives in the fields of management assistance, technical training, improved marketing facilities and credit and capital assistance. Several technical and capital assistance projects have been implemented in support of private sector initiatives, in particular through cooperatives (in the areas of citrus processing, vegetable packaging and fisheries). Modest assistance to business development occurred through the provision of advisory services, training and the strengthening of vocational training centres in both the West Bank and Gaza Strip. UNDP has also financed industrial sub-sector reviews and analyses through a non-governmental organization in Gaza.

165. During the second half of 1995, UNDP supported programme formulations in agricultural and tourism development in conjunction with FAO and the World Tourism Organization (WTO), respectively. UNDP also prepared a proposal for the provision of technical support for the planning of the proposed Nablus municipal industrial estate. Technical assistance programmes addressing priority needs, jointly identified with the Palestinian Authority, were also launched in 1996. These programmes are intended to support the establishment of legal and institutional frameworks conducive to the development of the private sector and investment in agriculture and tourism.

166. UNRWA established its ongoing income generation programme in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank in 1991, in the form of three revolving loan funds, to assist

small businesses in both the formal and informal sectors of the economy. The aim of the programme is to stimulate employment opportunities by promoting the creation and expansion of businesses, primarily in the manufacturing and other productive sectors of the economy. The programme, which also provides management support and training for entrepreneurs, has been successful so far in maintaining a high repayment rate. Since 1991, a total of \$7.76 million has been disbursed to 1,993 businesses. The recent prolonged closure has led to an increase in demand for working capital loans but a decrease in demand for capital investment loans.

167. Within the framework of a programme of action formulated through its 1993 multidisciplinary mission, ILO initiated a project to strengthen the capacity of private contractors to carry out their business more efficiently. This project was formulated in consultation with the relevant Palestinian authorities and institutions and is scheduled to be launched in 1996. ILO has also developed a project to assist the Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture in enhancing their services to small enterprises. Technical advisory services were also provided by ILO to formulate a project for establishing a national small business council. Other activities undertaken by ILO include assistance in developing a labour code, a project designed to build the capacity of the Palestinian Federation of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture and a programme for strengthening workers' organizations. ILO also fielded technical advisory missions in vocational training, which led to the formulation of a project proposal to upgrade facilities and staff, as well as modernize programmes at vocational training centres.

168. UNCTAD has carried out a number of studies on issues facing the Palestinian economy. Within the framework of its programme of technical cooperation activities in support of Palestinian trade, finance and related services, and in response to the request of the Palestinian Authority for urgent technical assistance, a number of technical cooperation activities were carried out during 1995 and the first quarter of 1996. UNCTAD has developed proposals for follow-up action in the areas of procurement of strategic consumer commodities and trade efficiency and facilitation, and for the encouragement of private investment law and the establishment and operation of export processing zones. A programme of follow-up activities is also being prepared for the reorientation of the insurance sector.

169. In the period 1993-1994, ITC carried out a number of programming missions, with the aim of assessing potential and needs in the foreign trade sector and formulating appropriate technical cooperation projects. Based on the findings and recommendations of these missions, ITC developed an integrated project aimed at assisting the Palestinian export community by strengthening the Palestinian Trade Promotion Organization. ITC also carried out a feasibility study for the development of exports of selected high-value, fresh-cut flowers. Based on that study, a technical cooperation project aimed at assisting agricultural cooperatives, growers and marketing enterprises, has been developed. ITC has also prepared a proposal for assisting in the establishment of industrial zones in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

170. UNIDO has had a long involvement in assisting industrial development in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. UNIDO has developed its programming strategy for

services to the Palestinian people which calls for the provision of technical assistance in the areas of private sector development for industry, human resources development, small- and medium-sized enterprises and advanced technologies. Within this framework, in 1995, UNIDO implemented training activities and formulation missions aimed at developing full-fledged programmes in priority areas.

171. FAO and ESCWA undertook several joint agricultural sector studies in 1993 and 1994. For 1996, FAO has formulated projects for capacity-building in agricultural policy analysis and planning, and agro-processing. ESCWA has also addressed the need to develop entrepreneurship through the training of trainers and potential entrepreneurs. In 1995, ESCWA developed further proposals for the establishment of pilot business and technology incubation centres in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

### 3. Main development needs

172. In its overall development strategy, the Palestinian Authority has identified the private sector as the principal engine for growth, development and employment generation. The Palestinian Authority's strategy for private sector development has three broad thrusts: the creation of an enabling environment and basic infrastructure for industry, agriculture and tourism; promotion of medium-term lending, particularly for small business and for farming activities; and promotion of private sector participation in infrastructure development.

173. The strategy for the development of the industrial sector calls for a distinction to be made between the needs of large- and medium-scale enterprises, which are primarily export-oriented, and the needs of small-scale and micro-enterprises, which account for over 90 per cent of industrial employment in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. For large- and medium-scale enterprises, the strategy emphasizes the establishment of industrial estates, an investment promotion programme, facilities for political risk insurance, an export development programme, and clarification and modernization of the legal and regulatory framework. For small-scale and micro-enterprises, the strategy calls for the development of municipal industrial complexes, incubator and business support services, and the promotion of leasing, venture capital and small credit schemes.

174. The revival of the agricultural sector also features prominently in the Palestinian Authority's strategy for private sector development. The major features of the strategy are to support private sector farming activities through improved legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks, to enhance the efficiency of traditional and domestic market-oriented agriculture, to enhance the efficiency and competitiveness of intensive and export-oriented agriculture and to improve access to regional and international markets.

175. Tourism development can also contribute to private sector development. The West Bank and Gaza Strip, endowed with unique cultural and historical assets, have the potential to become major tourist destinations. The Palestinian Authority's strategy is to promote and market the area as a tourism destination

and to integrate the area into global marketing systems; to assist in the development of tourism and related industries; and to improve training and human resources development.

176. However, there still exist constraints to the development of the private sector in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip that constitute obstacles to the implementation of the Palestinian Authority's strategy. These include the volatile security environment; the lack of clear and predictable legal, regulatory and administrative frameworks; and, most importantly, the frequent closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, severely affecting access to supplies, capital and the labour market in Israel and preventing the transfer of Palestinian produce, products and services.

#### 4. Integrated United Nations approach

177. United Nations initiatives have been developed in light of the Palestinian Authority's strategies and priorities, and implementing agencies will act in partnership with specialized institutions. United Nations assistance to private sector development will complement World Bank efforts, the main aim of which is the establishment of legal and regulatory frameworks for private sector development and, the development of border and local industrial estates. The United Nations will implement this strategy primarily through the provision of specialized advisory services, technical assistance and training to private, public and semi-public entities. Special attention will be given to the environmental soundness of the proposed development models; the creation of local capacities at the public and private sector levels which can, in the future, sustain development efforts and momentum; the utilization, whenever available, of local Palestinian capacities; and the incorporation of women and marginalized groups in mainstream economic development.

178. Human resources development should be strengthened to support emerging industries in the West Bank and Gaza Strip to respond effectively to the challenges of industrial development. The United Nations can assist in the formulation of policies and strategies for human resources development, based on an analysis of existing capacities and requirements, and assist institutions in providing technical, managerial and entrepreneurial training. UNIDO will develop a series of projects aimed at establishing and strengthening those institutions which specialize in industrial and vocational training.

179. The development of the labour market in the West Bank and Gaza Strip is being addressed through ongoing ILO projects aimed at improving the institutional capacity of the Ministry of Labour. ILO has already carried out some training activities and assisted the vocational training system, and its assistance will be further strengthened to support the authorities to respond better to labour market needs. Work on the preparation of labour statistics is already under way, and ILO will be formulating further interventions to develop reliable labour statistics to help monitor employment programmes and policies undertaken through the Palestinian employment programme. Utilizing its unique tripartite mandate, ILO will assist Palestinian institutions to set-up effective structures and mechanisms to facilitate social dialogue, and design and implement projects aimed at assisting both employers and trade unions. ILO will

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also continue to assist the Ministry of Labour in establishing a labour code for the proper functioning of the private sector.

180. ITC interventions in the foreign trade sector will include advice to the Palestinian Authority on appropriate strategies and the establishment of an institutional infrastructure for trade development and promotion. ITC will also provide technical assistance in the field of private sector investment, and UNDP will support the Palestinian Authority in establishing a legal and regulatory framework conducive to such investment, particularly foreign direct investment. UNIDO will provide training in the area of investment promotion and will assist Palestinian entrepreneurs in identifying foreign investors for joint venture projects.

181. On the basis of two studies on the development and expansion of the Palestinian economy, UNCTAD will expand its current programme of technical cooperation. In addition, UNCTAD will endeavour to strengthen the legal and institutional frameworks of the private sector.

182. Entrepreneurship and small business development is an important area for private sector development and employment generation. The United Nations system will continue to implement a plan of action to develop a conducive environment for entrepreneurship and self employment. ESCWA has formulated project proposals for the establishment of business and technology incubators to nurture new manufacturing start-ups, an area which UNDP is also ready to support. UNIDO and ILO are proposing to strengthen the capacities of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry. UNIDO is also proposing to provide support for the development of small- and medium-scale industrial enterprises. ILO will launch a project aimed at revitalizing the small business sector and is also proposing to provide support for the establishment of a Palestinian small business council. UNRWA intends to expand its training programmes to support potential entrepreneurs, particularly women's and social groups affected by unemployment. UNESCO will further develop its programme for the promotion of handicrafts, the main beneficiaries of which are women. UNV will provide short-term advisory services through UNITAR to assist private enterprises in the areas of management, strategic planning, etc. UNIFEM is planning to carry out exploratory activities for the development of a programme for the economic empowerment of women, while the Department for Development Support and Management Services is preparing to assist small business promotion.

183. UNIDO is proposing interventions aimed at facilitating access by enterprises to industrial support services, including support for the establishment of a Palestinian standards organization and support for the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics in the preparation of an industrial census. UNDP intends to expand its participation in the development of industrial zones in close cooperation with the World Bank and utilizing the specialized services of UNCTAD. In this context, UNDP will finance feasibility studies to identify off-site infrastructural requirements and may undertake the required infrastructural construction.

184. The development of tourism is potentially a major area of private sector growth. UNDP will, in complementarity with UNESCO activities in this sector, call upon the technical expertise of WTO to strengthen tourism institutions, in

particular the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities. The proposed focus will be the establishment of a legal, institutional and financial environment conducive to private sector investment in the tourism sector, and the promotion of Palestinian cultural heritage. UNV will provide technical assistance to the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities through the provision of specialists.

185. Concerning agriculture, United Nations assistance will follow a multi-track approach aimed at strengthening the institutional capacity of the Palestinian Authority for agricultural development; supporting sustainable natural resources management policies and practices; revitalizing support services to agricultural entrepreneurs; developing the sector's human resources and encouraging the competitiveness of agricultural products; and supporting the rehabilitation of essential rural physical infrastructures.

186. On the basis of an initial phase launched in 1996, UNDP, utilizing the technical expertise of FAO, is proposing to expand its support to the Ministry of Agriculture through a project aimed at enhancing the institutional, managerial and technical capabilities of the Ministry in the area of policy analysis and planning. In order to enhance agricultural production through the spread of technologies, genotypes and information to farmers, UNDP is formulating a project aimed at supporting the Palestinian Authority in defining and implementing appropriate and responsive policies and strategies for applied research and demand-driven extension. Several studies carried out by FAO in recent years have targeted rehabilitation needs in the fisheries sector and veterinary services, as well as the rehabilitation of artesian wells, springs and related irrigation canals. In order to ensure that Palestinian agricultural products conform to international standards, UNDP has formulated an action programme for the testing and control of agricultural produce for pesticide residues.

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OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL  
COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES BY THE  
SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THE  
INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS  
ASSOCIATED WITH THE UNITED  
NATIONS

Assistance to the Palestinian people

Report of the Secretary-General

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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. On 13 December 1996, the General Assembly adopted resolution 51/150, entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people", in which it, *inter alia*, stressed the importance of the work done by the Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories; urged Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people in order to assist in the development of the West Bank and Gaza, and to do so in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions; called upon the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs; and requested that the Secretary-General submit a report to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the resolution, containing: (a) an assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people; and (b) an assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them.

2. Mr. Chinmaya R. Gharekhan, the Representative of the Secretary-General to the Security Council from 1993 to 1996 and the Representative of the Secretary-General to the multilateral peace talks on the Middle East since January 1993, succeeded Mr. Terje Rød-Larsen of Norway as Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories in February 1997. Concurrently, Mr. Gharekhan also serves as the Representative of the Secretary-General to the multilateral peace talks on the Middle East, a position he has held since January 1993. In his previous report on assistance to the Palestinian people (A/51/171-E/1996/75), the Secretary-General provided an overview of the period from June 1995 until May 1996. The present report covers the period from June 1996 through May 1997.

3. Throughout the period under review, the Special Coordinator focused his efforts on:

(a) Coordinating and targeting donor-funded projects in order to alleviate unemployment and related socio-economic hardship and to encourage employment generation through the implementation of needed development projects;

(b) Working with the partners in the development effort to provide budgetary support to the Palestinian Authority and to address the budget deficit;

(c) Strengthening institution-building programmes and targeted technical assistance, in order that greater progress could be made towards reaching sustainable socio-economic development;

(d) Encouraging greater private-sector involvement in the development effort to stimulate growth, economic development and employment generation;

(e) Expediting donor disbursements so that the Public Investment Programme, adopted by the Palestinian Authority and supported by the international community, could be implemented.

## II. BACKGROUND

4. On 13 September 1993, the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization signed the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements at the White House in Washington, D.C. (the "Oslo Accords") (see A/48/486-S/26568). Recognizing that the socio-economic advancement of the Palestinians would be a necessary condition for the continued success of the peace process, the Secretary-General formed a high-level task force on the social and economic development of the Gaza Strip and Jericho, which identified the ways in which the United Nations could expand its programmes of assistance in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The Task Force, which completed its work on 23 September 1993, highlighted the need to implement projects that would quickly make a visible improvement in the daily lives of Palestinians and stressed the importance of continuing to support ongoing programmes which contributed to Palestinian socio-economic well-being.

5. On 1 October 1993, over 40 donor countries and institutions, including the United Nations, gathered at the Washington, D.C. Conference to Support Middle East Peace. The Conference, hosted by the United States, affirmed the urgent need to improve living conditions and make rapid progress towards sustainable socio-economic development in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Donors pledged approximately \$2.4 billion, which would be disbursed over the five years of the transitional period. The General Assembly, in its resolution 48/213 of 21 December 1993, entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people", called upon relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people and to improve coordination through an appropriate mechanism under the auspices of the Secretary-General.

6. In his report to the Fifth Committee of 29 March 1994 (A/C.5/48/71, para. 6), the Secretary-General noted that "in view of the mandates of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the nature of their respective operations ... it would be inappropriate to designate one as the 'lead agency' in the occupied territories with the responsibilities of implementation of resolution 48/213. Given the complexity and sensitivity of the situation in the region and the multiplicity of factors outside the United Nations system which will be involved during the transitional phase, it will be necessary to establish a specific mechanism to ensure effective coordination and intensification of international assistance to the Palestinians in the occupied territories to meet their immediate and longer-term needs". The Secretary-General announced his intention to appoint a Special Coordinator with responsibilities for, *inter alia*, "providing overall guidance to and facilitating coordination among the respective United Nations programmes and agencies which are operating in the territories, so as to ensure an integrated and unified approach towards economic and social development".

7. Accordingly, in 1994, the Secretary-General appointed a Special Co-Coordinator, Ambassador Terje Rød-Larsen, as the focal point for all United Nations economic, social and other assistance in the occupied territories. The Special Coordinator provides overall guidance to United Nations programmes and agencies in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, both those with representation in the field and those operating from abroad. The Special Coordinator facilitates coordination within the United Nations family, and also works closely with the World Bank, in assisting the Palestinian Authority in reaching an integrated and unified approach to the development effort launched by the Washington Conference. The Special Coordinator also represents the United Nations in the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee and related bodies established to follow up on the Washington Conference and serves as the focal point in dealing with the donor community. He maintains relations with relevant regional organizations and financial institutions, as well as maintaining close contact with non-governmental organizations.

8. Since its inception in 1994, the Office of the Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories (UNSCO), has been among those parties that have been instrumental in establishing the donor coordination mechanisms described below that have brought together the Palestinian Authority, donors, the World Bank and the United Nations. The unique position of the United Nations within these coordination mechanisms has enabled the Organization to influence policy and present projects for donor consideration. The United Nations presence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip has increased from three organizations in 1993 to 15 in 1997. An additional 12 organizations of the United Nations system are providing technical assistance and expertise to the Palestinian Authority. The combined United Nations total of funds dispersed through regular budgets and funds for specific projects was approximately US\$ 254 million in 1996.

### III. WORK OF LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL COORDINATION MECHANISMS

9. On 29 and 30 November 1994, the main donor-led body overseeing the assistance effort, the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, met at Brussels. At the suggestion of the United Nations, the Committee decided to devolve certain aspects of the donor coordination process to the level of representatives in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. For that purpose, the Committee established a Local Aid Coordination Committee, to be composed of the Palestinian Authority and all donors to the Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, including Israel. The co-chairs of the Local Aid Coordination Committee are Norway, in its capacity as Chair of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee; the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories; and the World Bank. The latter two act as joint secretariat to the Local Aid Coordination Committee. Representatives of the Government of Israel are also invited to the meetings. Meetings of the Local Aid Coordination Committee provide a forum for donors to report on their activities and the Palestinian Authority to provide updates on the budget deficit.

10. In April 1995, the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee established the Joint Liaison Committee, which provides a forum in which economic policy and practical matters related to donor assistance are discussed with the Palestinian Authority. It is comprised of the Palestinian Authority as gavel holder; Norway, in its capacity

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as Chair of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, as shepherd; the United Nations and the World Bank as joint secretariat; the United States of America and the European Union. Japan was also asked to take part in the meetings. The Joint Liaison Committee discusses bilateral issues relating to donor assistance with the participation of representatives of Israel, who are invited to attend all meetings. The Joint Liaison Committee first met on 15 May 1995 and meets approximately six times a year.

11. As part of his efforts in United Nations coordination, the Special Coordinator convened the third United Nations inter-agency meeting in Gaza, from 15 to 17 April 1996. The main purpose of the meeting, which was attended by over 20 agencies and programmes of the Organization, was to establish priorities for the United Nations programmes of assistance for 1997. These priorities, accompanied by project proposals for addressing unmet needs, were presented in the form of sectoral strategy papers in the areas of education, health, employment generation, infrastructure and housing, institution-building and the private sector. Entitled "Putting peace to work: priorities and strategies for the development effort in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1997", these papers articulated a coordinated and targeted approach to the main developmental priorities, as identified by the Palestinian Authority, and included proposals from United Nations agencies and programmes for specific technical and project assistance for implementation beginning in late 1996 and 1997. United Nations organizations developed their proposed 1997 programmes in response to needs and priorities identified by the Palestinian Authority and in coordination with the Ministry for Planning and International Cooperation, relevant sectoral ministries of the Palestinian Authority, as well as with the World Bank.

12. The proposed programme of United Nations assistance for 1997, as outlined in the strategy papers, was presented to the donor community by the Special Coordinator at the Consultative Group meeting held in Paris on 19 and 20 November 1996. The meeting was preceded by an intense round of meetings and consultations to prepare the Palestinian Public Investment Programme for 1997, in which the donor coordination mechanisms on the ground - sector working groups, the Local Aid Coordination Committee and the Joint Liaison Committee - coordinated in defining policies and setting priorities. This participatory process, involving the Palestinian Authority, donors, the United Nations, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), resulted in a comprehensive public investment programme of US\$ 865 million, which included 48 United Nations projects totalling \$113 million. At the meeting, attended by representatives of 35 donor countries and 14 development agencies, \$888 million was pledged.

13. Preparation of the Palestinian Development Plan for 1998-2000 commenced in early 1997. The aim of the improved preparatory process was to better target donor funding to Palestinian development needs in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The process drew upon the experience of 1996 and the expertise of Palestinian Authority ministries and agencies and the sector working groups of the Local Aid Coordination Committee. The sector working groups were set up in 1995 to facilitate communication and coordination between donors and the Palestinian Authority and are composed of the shepherd, the largest of the donors interested in that particular sector; the gavel holder, normally a Palestinian ministry; and the United Nations or the World Bank, which act as secretariat. Greater

emphasis is being placed on the role of the Palestinian gavel holder, in order to transfer greater responsibility for the sector working groups from the international community to the Palestinian Authority and to enhance capacity-building. As part of the effort to increase the efficiency and usefulness of the sector working groups, a series of evaluative workshops was held in early 1997, leading in some cases to the creation of more focused subgroups. Under the guidance of a steering committee, chaired by the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, the sector working groups will also assist the Palestinian Authority in formulating the Palestinian Public Investment Programme by identifying and prioritizing sectoral needs and by drafting development strategies.

#### IV. SECTORAL SITUATIONS AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

##### A. Education

14. Education is the largest public-service sector within the Palestinian Authority's area of responsibility, employing almost 22,000 people and catering to the needs of approximately 1.2 million children. Immediate priorities for the Palestinian Authority upon assumption of responsibility were the upgrading of rundown and inadequate physical infrastructure and a revitalization of human resources. Comprehensive efforts to relieve the overcrowding, insufficient number of schools and deteriorating premises are continuing and will remain a high priority owing to the demands of a rapidly increasing and youthful population. An estimated 40 new schools per year are required simply to keep up with the natural increase and there is still a need for textbooks, and classroom, laboratory and playground equipment in the almost 1,500 existing schools.

15. Capacity development at the classroom level is also urgently needed in order to revitalize an educational process which has suffered from low teacher morale and lack of institutional support. The framework for such efforts must be a comprehensive institutional development process targeting the educational system overall, its policy-making and implementation procedures at every level. Given the impact of education on long-term development, the sectoral priority is to support the Palestinian Authority's implementation of its National Plan of Action for Children, in which the formal, non-formal and early childhood education fields are targeted for improvement in quality, access and management.

##### B. Employment generation

16. The average number of Palestinians working legally inside Israel fell from a pre-war estimate of 180,000 or more, to 116,000 in 1992 and 83,000 in 1993, to an average of 22,000 for 1996. An estimated 16,000 Palestinians join the labour force each year, according to estimates of the International Labour Organization (ILO). Accommodating these new job seekers or even a part of the large number of unemployed and underemployed would require the creation of 30,000 to 40,000 new jobs each year. Owing to this high growth in the labour force (at roughly 4 per cent per annum) and the youthful nature of the population (almost 50 per cent under 15 years of age), it is unlikely that the

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Palestinian economy will be able to absorb many of those presently unemployed or accommodate the anticipated increases.

17. The employment problem in the West Bank and Gaza Strip requires a two-track approach, to address immediate needs through the provision of short-term job opportunities, while at the same time formulating long-term strategies to expand employment opportunities. Longer-term domestic opportunities must also be expanded to absorb those previously employed in Israel and short-term employment created to alleviate the economic and psychosocial effects of the change in circumstances. In order to address long-term employment needs, there must be changes in the preparation of the labour force: university graduates experience high levels of unemployment due to the concentration on humanities and social science rather than science and technology-related fields. Private enterprise and investment must be encouraged in such important sectors as agriculture, which represented 30 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 1993. Coupled with these measures, as is the case in all sectors, is the need to develop a transparent, streamlined legal and regulatory framework.

### C. Health

18. The fragmentation of health services between different providers, the lack of standardization in skills and services and the neglected state of physical infrastructure and equipment were the priority needs identified in the health sector by the Palestinian Authority upon its assumption of responsibility. In general, as with other sectors, the health sector had suffered from the lack of Palestinian participation at planning and decision-making levels during the years of occupation. In addition, the human and technical resources for gathering comprehensive data for the whole of the West Bank and Gaza Strip were unavailable; consequently, health providers were unable to ascertain fully the scale and priority of health problems.

19. There exists no comprehensive health safety net and many families cannot afford health insurance coverage. This creates particular problems in the case of specialist health care which is currently unavailable in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, necessitating patient referrals to Israeli hospitals. In addition, there is currently an overemphasis on curative care at the secondary and tertiary stages of an illness rather than preventive and primary health care, which greatly increases costs both system-wide and at the household level. There is a clear need for comprehensive planning and policy formulation at every level, emphasizing health education as well as primary health care. Currently, almost one quarter of all patients' first contacts with health-care services are initiated as "emergencies", which places higher financial and manpower costs upon the system. The 1996 health budget was US\$96 million, up from \$76 million the previous year.

20. Overall health indicators for the West Bank and Gaza Strip are similar to those of other Arab countries of the Middle East and of countries with similar socio-economic characteristics. Major causes of child mortality (deaths under five years) are acute respiratory infections, which account for 28 per cent of child deaths per year, and diarrhoeal disease (10 per cent). Child and maternal nutrition deficiencies are evident in the high rates of anaemia, diarrhoeal

disease and related problems. There remains a need for widespread health education - aimed at both the public and health professionals - in order to lessen the severity of acute respiratory infection, diarrhoeal disease and anaemia, among other pressing health problems. On the whole, however, the West Bank and Gaza Strip are characterized by pockets of need rather than the pressing health sector demands evident in some developing countries. Sectoral priorities remain centred around the strengthening of institutional and human capacity within the context of developing a locally relevant, locally managed comprehensive health-care system.

#### D. Infrastructure and housing

21. Neglected infrastructure remains one of the most pressing challenges facing the Palestinian Authority. Between 1970 and 1992, a total of US\$ 15 was spent per capita on infrastructure in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, compared with \$1,500 per capita in Israel and \$400 in Jordan. Consistent underfunding has resulted in decaying and inadequate systems which are overwhelmed by current demand. Modern roads planned with the needs of the local communities in mind, adequate and environmentally sound water and sanitation systems, and efficient electricity and telecommunications capable of facilitating development and commercial expansion; all remain priority areas of work in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In addition, housing is characterized by a large gap between supply and demand and a lack of government investment and remains subject to restrictions in zoning, planning and building permits.

22. Demand for electricity continues to increase, as the population grows and residential and industrial use expands. However, over 130 villages in the West Bank still have either no electricity at all or are supplied for only a few hours every day. Only 29 per cent of the population of the West Bank and Gaza Strip are connected to a public sewage system, and raw sewage continues to be diverted into cesspits, posing an environmental hazard to the underground aquifers which are the main water resource. In 1995, the Palestinian Water Authority assumed responsibility for the coordination of activities related to water and waste-water management but owing to the absence of any substantive development in the water and sewage sector previously, much remains to be done. Long-term planning has begun and sewage treatment plants are being overhauled on an individual basis, but the process of rehabilitating the entire system is lengthy. In addition, insufficient facilities for solid waste disposal or irregular collection in many areas compounds the problem.

23. Over 40 per cent of the existing road network requires urgent repairs, and the entire road system needs to be reworked in order to better facilitate growth, development and the expansion of commerce. Fully functioning airports and seaports are a necessity if trade, commerce and tourism are to develop to their full potential. Telecommunications are improving, although outstanding needs remain. Currently, the number of phones per person stands at 1:46, compared with 1:15 in Jordan, presenting a constraint to the development of commercial enterprises. The Palestinian Authority has plans for an expansion to a quarter of a million telephone lines by the year 2000, compared with the current figure of 90,000.



#### E. Institution-building

24. Three years after the assumption of responsibility by the Palestinian Authority, major progress has been made in institution-building efforts in the area of public administration at both central and local levels. Much of the donor initiative has been focused on support for the initial start-up phase of the Palestinian assumption of responsibilities, capital expenditures and recurrent costs. This has been accompanied by institution-building efforts, assisting in the development process through technical assistance to those ministries and other institutions responsible for the delivery of public and social services. The challenge continues to be to assist in the assumption of central responsibilities by the Palestinian Authority, and to support the expansion of scope at local and non-governmental tiers. At all levels, ensuring financial accountability and operational transparency of ministries, councils and organizations is key to continued international participation in the development process.

25. Increasing attention is also being devoted to the strengthening of the legal system, the development of institutional capacity for the administration of justice and protection of human rights, and the establishment of a regulatory framework in both the public and private sectors. Other priorities include the encouragement of private investment and the fostering of donor confidence by enhancing the legal environment surrounding private-sector investment, specifically, land registration, building and property ownership, and planning and zoning regulations. The public-sector regulatory framework also needs to be developed with respect to taxation and banking laws, labour laws and workers' rights, and environmental protection.

#### F. Private sector

26. The expansion and encouragement of the private sector is central to the achievement of long-term structural employment but investment is currently inhibited by fears of potential economic losses owing to closures and the resultant lack of access to markets and materials. In addition, there is the ongoing need to develop a comprehensive legal and regulatory framework which is conducive to private-sector investment. Continued support to the banking sector is also required, to ensure that the financial services needed for business investment and expansion are available and dependable.

27. Private-sector investment in housing construction accounts for some 85 per cent of private-sector investment. Agriculture is also an important economic activity, generating roughly one third of GDP and one quarter of all exports, largely centred around small, family-based farms. However, the sector has been unable to develop to its full economic potential, mainly owing to the effects of border closures, the lack of access to markets, the threat of ever decreasing access to water resources and dependence on, and inappropriate use of, chemical fertilizers and pesticides. There is a need for further development of rain-fed crops and multi-cropping, and institutional support, in the form of credit facilities, uniform legislation and research and testing stations where pioneer crop-testing and new methodologies can be tried out.

28. The Palestinian Authority has also highlighted the tourism sector as another area for development and income generation, and the approaching turn of the millennium is expected to attract a huge influx of visitors to the region. While major efforts are under way, particularly in Bethlehem, the sector requires additional physical infrastructure and improvement of services in order to capitalize on the opportunities offered and to counter the effects of the closure.

V. ASSISTANCE TO THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE: ONGOING PROGRAMMES,  
UNMET NEEDS AND PROPOSALS FOR ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE

29. After consultations with the programmes and agencies of the United Nations system active in the area (a list of which appears in the annex to the present report), the Special Coordinator prepared the following update on assistance received by the Palestinian people in the occupied territories during the reporting period from United Nations agencies and programmes, together with an analysis of needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them.

United Nations Department for Development Support and Management Services

30. The Department for Development Support and Management Services has been involved in the West Bank and Gaza Strip since 1995, when five project documents were formulated, comprising a comprehensive package of assistance to the Palestinian Authority in the area of public finance and business development. In February 1997, one of these projects involving the strengthening of audit capability received initial funding from the UNDP-Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (PAPP) as a component of a three-year programme on governance and public administration. The Department is providing technical support to the project as an associated agency. Specific proposals have also been put forward for projects covering: strengthening government financial and performance reporting; establishing internal auditing as a strong element of management control; and improving tax administration.

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

31. ESCWA has focused its activities on supporting the economic and social sectors in the occupied territories as well as monitoring their developments through the provision of advisory services and technical assistance and the preparation of reports, analytical studies and project proposals regarding the rehabilitation of the Palestinian economy. Activities in 1996 included a report of the advisory mission to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Natural Resources Bureau. Future proposals include the preparation of a project document on the rehabilitation of the agricultural sector and the provision of advisory services on agriculture, energy, the environment, industry, international trade, population and social development, statistics and water. ESCWA also organizes training workshops and seminars in cooperation with other specialized agencies and relevant Arab, regional and national organizations.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

32. FAO's assistance to the Palestinian people commenced in 1986. In 1993 and 1994, joint FAO/ESCWA missions visited the West Bank and Gaza Strip with the aim of assessing the situation of the agricultural sector and identifying needs for rehabilitation and development. In June 1996, FAO expanded its support to the Ministry of Agriculture through a project aimed at enhancing the institutional, managerial and technical capabilities of the Ministry in the area of policy analysis and planning. A March 1997 joint FAO/World Bank Cooperative Programme mission visited the area to identify the major components to be considered within the framework of the agricultural sector rehabilitation project and to formulate a detailed project description. The proposed project components are in line with the report of a World Bank mission of November 1996 and include proposals for natural resources management and rural access roads, market development and agricultural support services and institutional strengthening. Plans for 1997 and 1998 include implementing projects for the rehabilitation of springs, irrigation canals and wells and a swordfish longline training course for Gaza fishermen in Cyprus.

United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)

33. In May 1996, the Habitat Liaison Unit was established and staffed by an associate expert provided by the Italian Government. Subsequently, the two-year project entitled "A Support to Habitat Liaison Unit" was initiated. Since June 1996, Habitat has been preparing a project document entitled "Preparatory activities for the development of a national housing strategy in the West Bank and Gaza Strip". This project is intended to assist the Ministry of Housing in the preparation and formulation of a comprehensive housing policy and implementation strategy. An additional report entitled "Preliminary information for the sustainable cities programme in Gaza City" was prepared in December 1996 and an initial assessment mission was scheduled for June 1997.

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

34. IAEA has formulated a manpower development project with the objective of upgrading and strengthening human resources in the West Bank and Gaza Strip for the application of nuclear science and technology in the relevant sectors. Despite difficulties in the implementation of this project owing to the limited opportunities for providing technical assistance in the specialized field relevant to the mandate of the Agency, an agreement has been reached with the International Centre for Theoretical Physics in Trieste, Italy, to provide training, expert services and basic equipment to the University of Bethlehem for some activities approved by the Agency. In addition, IAEA has received a specific project request for consideration under its 1997-1998 technical cooperation programme, with the objective of setting up a laboratory at Bethlehem University to study irradiation effects on optical fibre sensors and to raise the level of training and research in this field.

International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)

35. ICAO has formulated three proposals for technical assistance to the Palestinian Civil Aviation Authority and has identified the following needs for

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1997: drafting of a civil aviation law and civil aviation-related regulations; procurement of aerodrome ground equipment; and assistance in decision-making regarding the construction of a heliport in Jericho. The Agency's proposal for the preparation of a civil aviation master plan was included in the Palestinian Authority's Public Investment Programme for 1997.

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

36. IFAD has designed and financed the ongoing Gaza Strip and Jericho Relief and Development Programme, under the responsibility of a non-governmental organization, American Near East Refugee Aid (ANERA). Local and international non-governmental organizations acted as partners to the newly emerging government agencies in the day-to-day implementation of the programme activities, to their mutual benefit. The programme was designed to address the immediate needs of small farmers and fishermen, women and landless people in the rural areas of Jericho and the Gaza Strip. Programme components include conservation and improving the utilization of irrigation water, rehabilitation of citrus and olive plantations, repair and maintenance of existing small-scale irrigation systems and fisheries development and promotion of income-generating activities. The programme also provides funds for institutional support and training.

37. In addition, IFAD has identified outstanding needs in the Ramallah and Nablus areas, covering approximately 146 villages and a population of 380,000 inhabitants. In agreement with the Palestinian Authority, priority will be given to land reclamation, agricultural roads and the rehabilitation of wells and springs. Assistance will be provided in the context of an IFAD area-based development project to benefit small farmers, the Participatory Natural Resource Management Project, by means of a projected IFAD loan of \$10 million.

International Labour Organization (ILO)

38. ILO, and its Turin International Training Centre, have been executing technical cooperation projects in the following fields: institution-building and labour administration; vocational training and rehabilitation; social and labour statistics; employment promotion; workers' activities; employers' activities; small enterprise development; and human resources development. The total budget of activities launched by ILO since 1994 amounts to US\$ 11.4 million.

39. During the last 12 months, ILO has assisted the Ministry of Labour in the fields of labour inspection, employment services, safety and health, and vocational training. ILO provided technical advisory services with respect to labour legislation. The Palestinian Employment Programme, which was launched in early 1997, strengthened the capacity of the Ministry of Labour in designing policies and programmes on employment and labour market issues, as well as establishing measures for the creation of sustainable and productive jobs. With the assistance of ILO, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics has finalized the design of a long-term programme for its Labour Statistics Department and has conducted three rounds of a labour force survey. ILO is assisting the Ministry of Social Affairs in its efforts to support the socio-economic reintegration of disadvantaged groups. An ILO-executed programme

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for the social and economic reintegration of ex-detainees focuses on staff training, technical advisory services and the provision of credit facilities for the creation of micro-enterprises.

40. In addition, capacity-building assistance has been provided to employers' and workers' organizations, related to the development of infrastructure, the training of staff and to policies and programmes. ILO is currently providing technical assistance to the Contractors Union to strengthen the managerial capacity of its affiliated members and is currently implementing a training programme of in-country and overseas courses specifically designed for Palestinian Authority officials as well as for workers' and employers' representatives. Preparatory work has been completed on identifying the main components for a comprehensive programme of institutional and human resources development for the Palestinian Public Administration sector. Another recently launched educational initiative supports the Ministry of Higher Education in the development of three technical colleges.

41. As part of its strategies for the 1998-1999 biennium, the ILO programme of assistance will continue to place special emphasis on the active promotion of workers and dialogue among the social partners. A high priority will be given to training and institution-building in the fields of labour market information systems, employment and manpower policies and private-sector development. Emphasis will be placed on the eradication of child labour, the promotion of job creation for small and medium-sized enterprises, the development of legal and institutional frameworks to facilitate income-generating job opportunities for women and disadvantaged sectors, and the development of national safety and health schemes. Specific proposals have been incorporated into the Palestinian Public Investment Programme, including ongoing projects for the development of the Ministry of Labour, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, as well as the National Centre for Public Administration.

#### International Maritime Organization (IMO)

42. IMO has formulated two proposals for technical assistance to the Palestinian Authority which identify, as a priority, the establishment of an independent maritime administration for the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Since March 1996, IMO has been executing a regional project for the Mediterranean financed by the European Commission's LIFE Programme. The Palestinian Authority is one of the 11 participants in the project, which is entitled "Development of port State control capability in the Mediterranean". Based on their participation, the Palestinian Authority has received a number of offers of technical assistance and training from a number of States in the Mediterranean. In addition, IMO is considering fielding a mission in order to discuss a proposed programme of technical assistance with the Palestinian Authority and donors represented in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

#### International Trade Centre (ITC)

43. In May 1996, ITC began implementing a technical cooperation project for the development of exports of selected high-value, freshly cut flowers. The project, entitled "Export development and promotion of high-value floricultural products", is aimed at assisting agricultural cooperatives, growers and

marketing enterprises in the development and diversification of high-value, non-traditional floricultural products and the export marketing of these products to regional and international markets. Complementary objectives of the project are to increase the role of Palestinian women in economic development through their direct involvement in agricultural production and export trade and to create associations for export marketing and extension services, as well as generating employment. In addition to three proposals for technical assistance to the agricultural export, trade and industrial sectors, ITC has recently formulated two project ideas, focusing on enhancement of the role of women in trade development and training in purchasing and supply management.

International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

44. Following ITU field missions in 1994 and 1995, a long-term technical assistance programme for 1996-1997 was formulated and an action plan drawn up focusing on the following sectoral priorities: secondment of senior technical export; preparation of a sectoral telecommunications study; preparation of a project document for the development of a long-term master plan for telecommunications and establishment of a telecommunications training programme; and granting of fellowships for technical training.

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

45. UNCTAD carried out two research studies in close consultation with the Palestinian Authority: "Prospects for sustained development of the Palestinian economy: strategies and policies for reconstruction and development"; and "Private investment in the Palestinian territory: recent trends and immediate prospects".

46. A programming and advisory services mission was fielded in 1996 in order to advise Palestinian Authority institutions with regard to trade policy. Organized within the context of the UNCTAD/UNDP Regional Programme for Arab States Trade Integration, two workshops were held in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, respectively, in March 1997, focusing on the emerging international trade system and its implications for the Palestinian economy. Follow-up activities are being developed in close cooperation with the Palestinian Authority and the relevant organizations of the United Nations system. Project profiles have been formulated in the following areas: assistance in the introduction of trade efficiency measures; assistance in human resources development; and expansion of trade in goods and services between the West Bank and Gaza Strip and Jordan, Egypt and other trading partners, as an initiative in subregional cooperation. Preparatory work has also been completed for the implementation of a UNDP-funded project on the Nablus industrial estate/export processing zone.

United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP)

47. The strategy of UNDCP focuses on a multisectoral approach to coordinate and integrate drug control policies into the broader developmental policies of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In 1995, in close collaboration with the Palestinian Authority, UNDCP prepared the "Multisectoral Drug Control Assistance to the Palestinian Authority" project, which will provide technical assistance to establish a drug control institutional framework, to reduce the illicit supply

of narcotic drugs through improved detection, interdiction and prosecution capacities and prevent and reduce drug abuse through improved awareness, treatment and rehabilitation methods. Emphasis will be placed on capacity-building through training in the above areas.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

48. UNDP's Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (PAPP) was initiated in 1980. Resources were dedicated to infrastructure-building projects; water supply systems, sewage systems, schools, hospitals, industrial zones and a citrus processing plant. The provision of infrastructure has been accompanied by a comprehensive programme of technical assistance and capacity development.

49. In 1996, UNDP expanded its advocacy role in the promotion of sustainable human development themes such as poverty eradication, sustainable livelihoods, gender in development and environmental management. UNDP also launched major activities aimed at enhancing capacity in governance at local, municipal and central levels of the Palestinian Authority, taking full advantage of the considerable local expertise available in the area. Responding to the severe economic situation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip as a result of prolonged periods of border closure, a primary UNDP/PAPP intervention was aimed at employment generation, with the result that 26,000 temporary jobs were created through six new employment generation projects. UNDP also began to formulate large-scale employment generation programmes, such as the infrastructure rehabilitation related to the Bethlehem 2000 initiative, as well as land reclamation, spring rehabilitation and water harvesting. The employment generation programme was also introduced in the West Bank for the first time.

50. Under its Infrastructure Development Programme, UNDP continued to provide both physical infrastructure rehabilitation and institution-building assistance. Domestic water systems for 20 rural villages were constructed in the West Bank, and rehabilitation of existing water networks and construction of ground storage reservoirs were completed in Hebron and Tulkarem. In the Gaza Strip, UNDP rehabilitated and upgraded the water distribution system for Khan Younis and completed a sewage collection system for an area adjacent to the Jabalia refugee camp. UNDP also provided institutional development assistance to the Palestinian Water Authority and to municipal water departments. The rehabilitation of 17 schools in the rural West Bank was also completed, and a school and sports complex built in Jericho. Two agricultural vocational training centres were constructed and UNDP also undertook constructions at al-Ittihad Hospital in Nablus, Beit Jala Hospital and Tulkarem Hospital. In addition, a four-building, 256-unit apartment complex for families of the Palestinian Police Force was built in Gaza. In total, UNDP delivered over \$37 million through its Infrastructure Development Programme in 1996.

51. Activities related to the promotion of sustainable human development included the completion, in April 1997, of a human development profile document. In addition, UNDP launched a number of initiatives focusing on the characteristics and root causes of poverty, including poverty-mapping and identification of policy options. UNDP also expanded its gender-in-development project and made progress in integrating two key public-sector activities into

the National Centre for Public Administration of the Palestinian Authority. Some 1,500 Palestinian civil servants participated in over 70 Public Administration Training Programme training courses, while 44 expatriate Palestinian TOKTEN (Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals) consultants were fielded to the benefit of 28 Palestinian Authority institutions. In addition, a UNDP/PAPP Governance and Public Administration Support Programme was formulated in 1996.

52. Within private-sector development, UNDP focused on agriculture, with several large-scale programmes in policy analysis and planning, institutional support, research and extension, brucellosis control and the development and/or rehabilitation of land and water resources through labour-intensive methods. The UNDP/United Nations Capital Development Local Rural Development Programme was also reformulated in 1996. In addition, in the private sector UNDP, together with the World Tourism Organization, launched the initial phase of a tourism development programme, including the Bethlehem 2000 initiative and other tourism activities.

53. UNDP has expanded its United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and a national UNV modality was introduced. UNV is currently executing a youth project to rehabilitate seven youth centres across the Gaza Strip. UNVs are also involved in a campaign to control brucellosis to be implemented in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Phase II of UNV's White Helmets Initiative started in February 1997 to follow up on a development of the master plan for the city of Gaza. The project includes computer training to staff members of the urban planning department. Three sports experts arrived in March 1997 to work with the Ministry of Youths and Sports in training the national soccer team and conducting a training-of-trainers programme. UNV's future plans include a project with a school for the hearing-impaired and plans to implement a project in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, focusing on women's health issues.

54. In 1997, UNDP/PAPP is continuing its programming activities aimed primarily at strengthening the human resources and institutional capacities of its Palestinian implementing partners. Major programme initiatives for the year include the continuation of UNDP/PAPP's capacity-building technical assistance programmes, such as the Governance and Public Administration Support Programme, the Local Rural Development Programme and the Agriculture Development Programme. As a follow-up step to the first Human Development Profile, new initiatives will also be launched in poverty eradication, gender-in-development, sustainable livelihoods, and community-based participatory development. UNDP/PAPP will also continue to support the Palestinian Authority through ongoing support to the Bethlehem 2000 Steering Committee.

#### United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

55. In cooperation with the Palestinian Authority, UNEP has developed two project proposals. The project on environmental law aims at assisting the Palestinian Authority in developing its human resources capacity in environmental law, policy and administration. The project on environmental economics focuses on training in environmental impact assessment. In addition,



UNEP has been active in advocating the inclusion of an environmental perspective in the development programmes of other United Nations agencies.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

56. UNESCO has undertaken a programme of cooperation with the Palestinian people since 1974. In April 1994, a plan of action was prepared by the joint UNESCO/Palestinian Coordination Committee which was translated into a Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (PAPP), which contains 27 projects in UNESCO's fields of expertise. The aim of UNESCO/PAPP is to continue to improve education, training and educational materials in order to strengthen institution- and capacity-building in Palestinian institutions.

57. In the education sector, phase I of the development of the Palestinian Curriculum Development Centre was concluded in October 1996 with the preparation of a five-year plan, and with phase II commenced immediately thereafter. UNESCO also began implementation of its "Inclusive schools and community support programmes" in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and granted fellowships for long- and short-term study abroad for Palestinian students. UNESCO also assisted in the acquisition of training and equipment by the Ministries of Education and Higher Education and related institutions and carried out intensive capacity development at the planning and policy formulation levels within the education sector. Under the Palestinian European Academic Cooperation in Education (PEACE) programme, co-sponsored by UNESCO and the European Union, an international conference took place at Nablus in November 1996 in support of Palestinian universities. Related activities included exchanges of academic staff between Palestinian and European universities, the donation of scientific texts and equipment and ongoing activities by the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme in archaeology and languages.

58. In support of the Bethlehem 2000 initiative, a master plan for activities in Bethlehem celebrating the turn of the millennium has been developed. Related activities in 1996 included a joint Italian-Palestinian workshop on tourism, a touring photographic exhibition and a Peace Concert held in Italy. UNESCO's other activities in the field of communications and culture include the restoration of the mosaics in Hisham's Palace in Jericho and the initiation of a project to modernize the Palestinian Information Agency, Wafa.

59. UNESCO's proposals for 1998-1999 include the continuation of current initiatives in education and higher education and culture, the development of public libraries, the creation of an archaeological park in Jericho, the establishment of a Palestinian museum and the development of youth/cultural centres. A UNESCO liaison office was opened in Ramallah in the West Bank in May 1997.

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

60. UNFPA first extended assistance to the Palestinian people in 1986 in cooperation with the World Health Organization. UNFPA's assistance was provided on a project-by-project basis until 1996, when the first UNFPA Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (PAPP 1996-1999) was developed.

61. UNFPA/PAPP addresses basic needs in three core areas. In reproductive health, the programme aims to develop capacity in the Ministry of Health's Department of Women's Health and Development and the Department of Primary Health Care, to better develop, coordinate and monitor the implementation of women's health policies. UNFPA/PAPP will also assist in providing reproductive health-care services to 100 primary health-care centres and two women's health centres in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. In addition, following on the successful implementation of the women's centre for health care, social assistance and legal counselling and community education in Bureij camp in the Gaza Strip, plans for a similar centre in the Jabalia camp received preliminary approval by UNFPA in January 1997. UNFPA has also recently approved the Jenin Community-based Reproductive Health Project, which is intended to raise awareness of reproductive health issues, including family planning, among men and women in Jenin, as well as strengthening the capacity of 30 non-governmental organization-run clinics for the provision of reproductive health services and information.

62. In the area of population and development strategies, UNFPA/PAPP will assist the Palestinian Authority in carrying out a census to make available reliable and up-to-date population and housing data necessary for development planning. In addition, UNFPA has been assisting the Palestinian Authority in formulating a project in training in population and vital statistics. Finally, in the area of advocacy, UNFPA/PAPP will concentrate on sensitizing policy makers and planners to gender issues and ensuring that gender concerns are integrated into development plans.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights/Centre for Human Rights

63. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights/Centre for Human Rights signed a technical cooperation agreement with the Palestinian Authority in April 1996 to provide for the implementation of a comprehensive technical cooperation programme in the field of human rights in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. As part of the programme, the Office and the Centre established an office in Gaza in November 1996 to implement programme activities in cooperation with Palestinian counterparts.

64. A major objective is the establishment of a legal framework consistent with international human rights standards. The complexity of the Palestinian legal system, reflecting multiple legal influences and heritages, makes the harmonization of laws a priority. Efforts are being devoted to strengthening the technical capacity of the relevant Palestinian bodies and institutions and mobilizing existing expertise to ensure integration of international standards in the new Palestinian legislation. Activities of the Office and the Centre in this area have included direct assistance to the Legislation and Legal Opinion Office of the Ministry of Justice. In particular, assistance is being provided in drafting a new prison law and training staff of the Office in legal drafting techniques. Support is also being given to the various local organizations and academic centres to conduct legal analysis and review work in areas crucial to the strengthening of the rule of law. The Palestinian Authority is further being assisted in developing a national plan of action for human rights in Gaza and the West Bank to facilitate coordinated and strategic planning in this

field. The Office and the Centre are also working with the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Human Rights with the objective of supporting its research and policy advice functions on human rights.

65. In addition, the Office and the Centre are supporting institutions essential in ensuring implementation of laws and policies protective of human rights at the national level and are working to establish a human rights training capacity within the Palestinian police force by developing a human rights curriculum and a programme for the training of police trainers in human rights. In the area of penal institutions, they are focusing on assistance in developing legislation on prisons and on strengthening the judiciary. Direct assistance is also being provided to non-governmental organizations in the area of law reform and women's rights, with a view to supporting legal research to identify areas where the development of legislation to promote women's rights and equal opportunities is needed. The Office and the Centre also support the work of the Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizens' Rights.

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

66. UNICEF's programme for Palestinian women and children in the West Bank and Gaza Strip began in 1980 and expanded in 1991. The UNICEF Programme of Cooperation is comprised of two supporting programmes and four sectoral programmes. Of the supporting programmes, "Planning and capacity development of Palestinian ministries and institutions" includes social sector database development, studies, surveys, training of personnel and publication of reports; and "Advocacy and communication" focuses on promoting the United Nations Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the goals of the World Summit for Children and the National Programme of Action for Palestinian Children.

67. The sectoral programme on health and nutrition focuses on capacity development and community mobilization, the technical and supply assistance provision of technical assistance and supplies, including: expanded programme of immunization; control of diarrhoeal disease and acute respiratory infections within the primary health-care system; health education for adolescents and women; continued support to the Health Services Management Unit; support of women's health issues and policy promotion on iodine deficiency disorders and breastfeeding; and technical support for emergency preparedness to the Ministry of Health and non-governmental organizations.

68. Programmes in education consist of technical and cash support to primary education through the Ministry of Education by means of teacher training, curriculum development, active learning and reading promotion projects. Capacity development of the Ministry of Education was supported through the programme on educational management of information systems.

69. Projects carried out with the Ministry of Social Affairs and non-governmental organizations under the programme on early childhood development and better parenting include the development of safe play areas for children and psychosocial development activities for children affected by trauma. The youth and community development programmes focus on the mobilization of youth, summer camps for entertainment and non-formal education,

and the development of a Child-Friendly Community Initiative in 15 communities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

70. UNICEF's efforts have been focused on improving the quality of basic services, targeting the most vulnerable groups in society and reducing gender and regional disparities. The adoption by the Palestinian Authority of the National Programme of Action for Children, the establishment of a Secretariat for Children within the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation as well as other initiatives by the Palestinian Authority are evidence of the endorsement of UNICEF's advocacy of "putting children first". In 1997, UNICEF's activities will be extended to local institutions and municipalities, and it will also be necessary to expand cooperation with non-governmental organizations, international, regional and women's organizations. UNICEF's programme of cooperation for the period 1998-2000 will address these needs by calling for investment in a basic system of social services to support the peace process.

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

71. UNIDO has developed a strategy for technical assistance in private-sector development for industry, small and medium-scale enterprises, human resources development and technology. UNIDO's programme complements existing initiatives being implemented by bilateral and multilateral donors and non-governmental organizations and aims to address areas not yet covered by ongoing support programmes. In continuation of a project for the integrated development of the building materials and construction industry, UNIDO completed a series of background studies, conducted a study tour and held a number of seminars on sectoral assessment. Follow-up activities include the establishment of a Palestinian National Building Committee. The organization's other activities included support for the establishment of the Palestine Standards Organization; and preparatory assistance for the development of small and medium-sized enterprises. In addition, UNIDO began implementing a project for the promotion of the application of renewable energy and conducted a training seminar on industrial project preparation and appraisal in the West Bank.

United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)

72. UNIFEM's activities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip have focused on institution-building, information facilitation and economic empowerment of women. The pilot phase of the Women in Development (WID) Facilitation Initiative is being implemented through the establishment of a computer database, the holding of workshops on the use of the Internet as a means of networking among Palestinian women and on women's credit programmes, and the issuance of the Beyond Beijing Newsletter. A regional project is being finalized covering the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Egypt and Yemen. UNIFEM is also working to promote the principles embodied in the Campaign to Eradicate Discrimination against Women. In addition, the Enterprise Development Project is being carried out in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs. By the end of 1996, 21 co-trainers in business skills training and 20 low-income women entrepreneurs had undergone training. Training is an ongoing component of the project, with the objective of transferring management skills to potential women entrepreneurs through the training of trainers.

United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)

73. As part of its capacity-building programme with the Palestinian Authority and with the benefit of logistical support from UNDP, UNITAR carried out activities in the following areas: financial management and audit issues; management development programmes; and statistical training programmes. Assistance included the organization of local and regional workshops for 85 employees from a number of Palestinian Authority ministries. In addition, the Institute drafted a comprehensive report for the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics for the development of a statistics training centre and related programmes and placed a technical consultant in taxation law within the Palestinian Authority Ministry of Finance. UNITAR is in the process of formulating capacity development programmes for 1998-1999 in management development training; statistics training; grass-roots training for economic and social development; and a joint UNITAR/UNDP training programme in financial management and auditing.

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)

74. The total number of refugees served by UNRWA in the West Bank and Gaza Strip was 1,270,333; 545,577 of these were living in 27 refugee camps. UNRWA operates 385 facilities in the area and employs approximately 8,750 staff, over 98 per cent of whom are locally recruited Palestinians. The operational nature of the Agency's activities differs from that of other United Nations organizations, which for the most part work through the Palestinian Authority or local executing agencies.

75. In the education sector, UNRWA's 262 elementary and preparatory schools accommodated 188,588 pupils in the 1996/97 school year, an increase of 13,282 over the previous year. Despite progress in the construction and upgrading of schools, many operated on double shift, were accommodated in unsatisfactory rented premises or suffered from overcrowding. Owing to lack of funds, UNRWA remained unable to extend the basic education cycle in the West Bank from nine to 10 years, in accordance with reforms introduced by the Jordanian Ministry of Education and as requested by the Palestinian Authority. The Agency's four vocational and technical training centres provided a variety of programmes to 2,046 trainees. In addition to regular in-service training programmes, the Educational Sciences Faculty (ESF) at the Ramallah training centres offered pre-service and in-service teacher training leading to a first university degree for 600 trainees. In July 1996, the first group of ESF students graduated from the programme. The inability of Gaza students enrolled at West Bank training centres to obtain permits to attend courses led to the introduction of compensatory ESF classes in Gaza. Merit-based scholarships were awarded to 413 students for study at universities in the region. UNRWA's 1997 education budget for the West Bank and Gaza Strip was \$70 million.

76. UNRWA's 1997 health budget for the West Bank and Gaza Strip was \$31 million. The Agency operated 51 health facilities which handled 3.8 million patient visits in 1996. Rehabilitation services were provided through 12 physiotherapy clinics. In the Gaza Strip, UNRWA maternity units accounted for approximately one third of all refugee births. Secondary care was made

available to refugee patients through a combination of contractual agreements with non-governmental and private hospitals and partial reimbursement of treatment costs, and directly at UNRWA's 43-bed Qalqilia hospital in the West Bank. Environmental health services included sewage disposal, management of storm-water runoff, provision of safe drinking water, collection and disposal of refuse and control of insect and rodent infestation. Work continued on the 232-bed European Gaza Hospital, with a view to alleviating the serious shortage of hospital beds and adequate medical services in the Gaza Strip. Upon completion, the hospital will be handed over to the Palestinian Authority Ministry of Health. An affiliated Gaza College of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences would help to provide qualified staff for the hospital.

77. In the relief and social services sector, UNRWA's special hardship programme provided direct material and financial assistance to 89,280 eligible refugees. Assistance provided under the programme included food rations and eligibility for shelter rehabilitation and poverty alleviation programmes, including a skills-training and apprenticeship project in the West Bank. UNRWA sponsored 24 women's programmes, 15 community rehabilitation and 27 youth activity centres, plus a rehabilitation centre for the visually impaired in Gaza. Promotion of community management and income-generating activities were key themes of the community centres' activities. UNRWA continued to operate a special after-school recreation programme to provide supervised extracurricular activities for Gaza schoolchildren. To address the hardship resulting from the extended closure of the Gaza Strip in 1996, UNRWA introduced an emergency job-creation programme which provided temporary employment to some 2,700 persons. The Agency's 1997 relief and social services budget for the West Bank and Gaza Strip was \$19 million.

78. UNRWA continued implementation of its Peace Implementation Programme, an investment initiative launched in 1993 with the aim of making the results of the Middle East peace process felt at the local level. Through the programme, UNRWA sought to improve infrastructure, create employment and enhance socio-economic conditions within the Palestine refugee community in the Agency's five fields of operation. The programme enabled UNRWA to increase its expenditures dramatically so as to improve conditions in refugee communities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, for which by May 1997 it had received a total of \$179.5 million in earmarked pledges and contributions.

79. The Agency continued to operate an income-generation programme to create job opportunities and alleviate poverty by making credit available to small businesses and micro-enterprises through revolving loan funds established with project contributions. Established in 1991 in response to deteriorating socio-economic conditions and rising unemployment, the programme had by the end of 1996 provided a total of \$12.7 million in loans at commercial interest rates to 4,327 enterprises, while achieving repayment rates approaching 100 per cent.

80. UNRWA continued to cooperate with and render assistance to the Palestinian Authority. Attention was devoted to harmonization of services between UNRWA and the Palestinian Authority, in the interests of standardizing programmes and services and contributing to the development of efficient self-reliant structures. In July 1996, UNRWA completed the move of its principal headquarters units to the Gaza Strip, in accordance with the decision of the

Secretary-General endorsed by the General Assembly. UNRWA's work in the West Bank and Gaza Strip continues to be affected by the continuing shortfalls in contributions to the Agency's regular budget since 1993. Those shortfalls, together with a series of austerity measures implemented in order to reduce deficits, have prevented UNRWA from expanding services at a rate commensurate with the growth in the registered refugee population and produced a deterioration in the quality of services provided. The Agency's operations are also being impeded by security-related measures imposed by the Israeli authorities, which place severe restrictions on the freedom of movement of Palestinians with local residency, including UNRWA staff.

Office of the Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories (UNSCO)

81. In addition to its support, outlined above, to the donor and United Nations coordination mechanisms, UNSCO continued to coordinate bilateral and multilateral training programmes for the Palestinian Police Force. The main objective has been to help transform international training efforts into a longer-term framework to enable the police force to undertake its own specialized training. During the reporting period, a joint formulation team produced a comprehensive project document for the establishment of a police academy for 400 students in Jericho and in 1996 31 training courses took place in the West Bank and Gaza. UNSCO provides support services to donors, including the facilitation and briefing of visiting missions and trainers as well as assisting in the monitoring, follow-up and evaluation of courses. Training courses are designed to meet needs identified by the Palestinian Police Force and expressed to the international community, through the Local Aid Coordination Committee Sector Working Group on the Police, for which UNSCO serves as secretariat.

82. In June 1996, an Economic and Social Monitoring Unit was initiated to provide donor country representatives, United Nations agencies and Palestinian Authority agencies with analyses of general economic and social conditions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip through quarterly reports on economic and social conditions. A legal adviser was appointed in late 1996 to coordinate the development of the rule of law sector, through the preparation and distribution of appropriate documents and the facilitation of consultation within the sector. In addition, a "Directory of non-governmental organizations in the Gaza Strip" and a "Directory of non-governmental organizations in donor countries: assistance to the Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip" were published in early 1997, to provide information, in Arabic and English, on all non-governmental organizations operating in the Gaza Strip as well as approximately 180 international organizations in donor countries. The aim was to provide local Palestinian NGOs with an overview of international non-governmental organizations working in their area so as to assist them in forging links and facilitating fund-raising. A similar project is being planned for non-governmental organizations in the West Bank.

Universal Postal Union (UPU)

83. In the West Bank and Gaza Strip, UPU has developed a programme of cooperation with the Palestinian Authority aimed at enhancing the human and technical resource capacity of the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunication.

Within the framework of this overall strategy, UPU has been implementing a project through which postal employees have received training, and postal equipment has been provided to the central administration of the Ministry.

World Food Programme (WFP)

84. The World Food Programme has been providing assistance to the Palestinian non-refugee population in the West Bank and Gaza Strip since September 1991. Beginning in 1994, WFP has concentrated its efforts in the Gaza Strip and has been emphasizing poverty alleviation and social relief interventions aimed at the most severe hardship cases among the non-refugee population. WFP assistance currently reaches some 16 per cent of the total Gaza non-refugee population, approximately 50,000 people.

85. WFP's completed work in the reporting period included support to hardship cases and support for the rehabilitation of post-conflict victims in the Gaza Strip. The major share of WFP's assistance under this programme is aimed at supporting the social safety net scheme of the Ministry of Social Affairs. The scheme targets approximately 50,000 needy persons registered as special hardship cases, over 65 per cent of whom are women heads of household. WFP aid addresses the urgent food security needs of such households, constituting an appreciable and inflation-free input for beneficiaries. Beginning in September 1996, a technical assistance component of the project allocated funding to provide one-year in-service training to 10 newly recruited social workers. An additional 20 women from low-income households, not registered as special hardship cases, are volunteers assisting project staff in the distribution of food commodities.

86. The World Food Programme also assists local organizations active in health and social welfare. It provides non-governmental organizations with food aid to supplement their operating budgets, allowing them to hire and retain needed staff and volunteers. It also runs a food-for-training project targeting 1,000 youth in the seven training centres and two rehabilitation centres for the blind and visually impaired run by the Ministry of Social Affairs. WFP has also been supporting a pilot project targeting some 500 households of small-scale fishermen and landless farmers, providing food aid against a cash payment equivalent to 30 per cent of the local market value of the donated commodities. The aim of the project is to increase the household food security of the targeted group and to establish a project fund for the purchase of agricultural inputs, in support of fisheries and post-harvesting activities, and for community development.

World Health Organization (WHO)

87. Having supported the Ministry of Health during the period of the transfer of responsibilities to the Palestinian Authority, WHO is now cooperating with the Ministry in strengthening the Palestinian health system. During the period of comprehensive closure in 1996, WHO assisted the Ministry in complying with the MECACAR (Mediterranean, Caucasus and Central Asian Republics) initiative of polio eradication in the region by urgently procuring 1.2 million doses of poliomyelitis vaccine for its polio immunization campaign. The procurement and delivery of expensive vaccines for the expanded programme of immunization (EPI)



campaign and of cold-chain equipment is also being implemented by emergency donation. This donation will assist the Ministry in carrying out its programme of school immunization, controlling hepatitis B and preventing the spread of communicable diseases such as meningitis influenza to certain high-risk groups. A review of EPI surveillance was also carried out and recommendations made to improve the overall quality of the EPI programme.

88. Attention is also being directed at the strengthening of the public health system. The Public Health Laboratory in the Gaza Strip has been equipped with needed technology and WHO has fielded a mission to define the legal framework for the operation of a proposed Central Public Health Laboratory in the West Bank, as well as assessing the necessity of reviewing existing public health legislation. Other missions proposed ways of strengthening Ministry of Health's policies and addressing neglected critical health issues, assessed nutritional policies, proposed ways of strengthening the capabilities of the Ministry of Health to address the emerging problem of malnutrition, as well as improving the Ministry's capacity to deal with nutritional issues related to epidemiological transmission. A review of major public health programmes was also undertaken with the Ministry of Health with the aim of developing a project proposal for strengthening the Ministry's capabilities in this area. This included a review of maternal and child health activities, the tuberculosis programme, the diabetes control programme and brucellosis control. A team of consultants cooperated with Bir Zeit University to establish the first diploma course in primary health care, designed to upgrade the training of health-care personnel and to familiarize health workers with modern procedures. A full-time consultant has been provided to the Department of Community Health at Bir Zeit University to assist in developing the curriculum for a diploma course in public health care.

89. In order to rationalize the drug sector, WHO is assisting the Ministry of Health in conducting a drug situation analysis and in developing policies aimed at improving the provision and availability of affordable, high-quality drugs and promoting their rational use. Together with UNDP, the organization also provided support to the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture in detailing the Palestinian Programme for the Control of Brucellosis. In addition, in order to devise an agreed framework for health-sector development for the West Bank and Gaza Strip and to identify public investment initiatives, WHO is cooperating with the World Bank and the Ministry of Health in drawing up a sectoral review outlining development strategies for the health sector for the medium term. The review will assist the Ministry of Health in developing the National Health Plan. WHO is also providing the assistance of a full-time consultant to develop the National Health Plan.

ANNEX

United Nations departments, programmes and agencies  
active in the occupied territories

Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division  
Department for Development Support and Management Services  
ESCWA Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia  
FAO Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations  
IAEA International Atomic Energy Agency  
ICAO International Civil Aviation Organization  
IFAD International Fund for Agricultural Development  
ILO International Labour Organization  
IMO International Maritime Organization  
ITC International Trade Centre  
ITU International Telecommunication Union  
UNCHS United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)  
UNCTAD United Nations Conference on Trade and Development  
UNDCP United Nations International Drug Control Programme  
UNDP United Nations Development Programme  
UNEP United Nations Environment Programme  
UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization  
UNFPA United Nations Population Fund  
United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights/Centre for Human Rights  
UNICEF United Nations Children's Fund  
UNIDO United Nations Industrial Development Organization  
UNIFEM United Nations Development Fund for Women  
UNITAR United Nations Institute for Training and Research  
UNRWA United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East  
UNSCO Office of the Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories  
UNV United Nations Volunteers  
UPU Universal Postal Union  
WFP World Food Programme  
WHO World Health Organization



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**Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations**

**Assistance to the Palestinian people**

**Report of the Secretary-General**

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\*\* E/1998/100.

## I. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 52/170 of 16 December 1997 on assistance to the Palestinian people, *inter alia*, stressed the importance of the work done by the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories; urged Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people in order to assist in the development of the West Bank and Gaza, and to do so in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions; called upon the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs; and requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the resolution, containing (a) an assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people and (b) an assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them.

2. Mr. Chinmaya R. Gharekhan, the Representative of the Secretary-General to the Security Council from 1993 to 1996 and the Representative of the Secretary-General to the multilateral peace talks on the Middle East since January 1993, was appointed United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories in February 1997. In his previous report on assistance to the Palestinian people (A/52/159-E/1997/69), the Secretary-General provided an overview of the period from June 1996 until May 1997. The present report covers the period from June 1997 through May 1998. In addition, in response to Economic and Social Council resolution 1997/67 of 25 July 1997, paragraph 8, in which, *inter alia*, the Council called upon the Secretary-General to continue to include, in the report of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories, an update on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in collaboration with relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations, section IV below on living conditions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip has been included.

3. Throughout the period under review, the Special Coordinator focused his efforts on the following:

(a) Coordinating donor-funded projects in order to alleviate unemployment and related socio-economic hardship and to encourage employment generation through the implementation of needed development projects;

(b) Working with the partners in the development effort to provide budgetary support to the Palestinian Authority and to address the budget deficit;

(c) Strengthening institution-building programmes and targeted technical assistance so that greater progress could be made towards achieving sustainable socio-economic development;

(d) Encouraging greater private sector involvement in the development effort to stimulate growth, economic development and employment generation (see sect. V below);

(e) Providing logistic and other assistance to the Palestinian Authority in the preparation of the Palestinian Development Plan, 1998–2000;

(f) Expediting donor disbursements so that the Palestinian Development Plan, 1998–2000 prepared by the Palestinian Authority may be implemented.

## II. Background

4. On 13 September 1993, the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization signed the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements at the White House in Washington, D.C. (the “Oslo Accords”) (see A/48/486-S/26568). Recognizing that the socio-economic advancement of the Palestinians would be a necessary condition for the continued success of the peace process, the Secretary-General formed a high-level task force on the social and economic development of the Gaza Strip and Jericho, which identified the ways in which the United Nations could expand its programmes of assistance in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The task force, which completed its work on 23 September 1993, highlighted the need to implement projects that would quickly lead to a visible improvement in the daily lives of Palestinians and stressed the importance of continuing to support ongoing programmes that contributed to Palestinian socio-economic well-being.

5. On 1 October 1993, over 40 donor countries and institutions, including the United Nations, gathered at the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, held in Washington, D.C. The Conference, which was hosted by the United States of America, affirmed the urgent need to improve living conditions and make rapid progress towards sustainable socio-economic development in the West Bank

and Gaza Strip. Donors pledged approximately \$2.4 billion, which would be disbursed over the five years of the transitional period. The General Assembly, in its resolution 48/213 of 21 December 1993, called upon relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people and to improve coordination through an appropriate mechanism under the auspices of the Secretary-General.

6. In his report to the Fifth Committee, dated 29 March 1994 (A/C.5/48/71, para. 6), the Secretary-General noted that, in view of the mandates of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the nature of their respective operations, it would be inappropriate to designate one as the "lead agency" in the occupied territories with the responsibilities of implementation of resolution 48/213. Given the complexity and sensitivity of the situation in the region and the multiplicity of factors outside the United Nations system that would be involved during the transitional phase, it would be necessary to establish a specific mechanism to ensure effective coordination and intensification of international assistance to the Palestinians in the occupied territories to meet their immediate and long-term needs. The Secretary-General announced his intention to appoint a Special Coordinator with responsibilities for, *inter alia*, providing overall guidance to and facilitating coordination among the respective United Nations programmes and agencies that are operating in the territories, so as to ensure an integrated and unified approach towards economic and social development.

7. Accordingly, in 1994, the Secretary-General appointed a Special Coordinator, Mr. Terje Rød-Larsen (Norway), as the focal point for all United Nations economic, social and other assistance in the occupied territories. The Special Coordinator provides overall guidance to United Nations programmes and agencies in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, both those with representation in the field and those operating from abroad. The Special Coordinator facilitates coordination within the United Nations family, and works closely with the World Bank, in assisting the Palestinian Authority in reaching an integrated and unified approach to the development effort launched by the Washington Conference. The Special Coordinator also represents the United Nations in the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee and related bodies established to follow up on the Washington Conference and serves as the focal point in dealing with the donor community. He maintains close relations with relevant regional organizations and

financial institutions, as well as with non-governmental organizations.

8. Since its inception in 1994, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories has been among those parties that have been instrumental in establishing the donor coordination mechanisms described below that have brought together the Palestinian Authority, the United Nations, the World Bank and the donor community. The unique position of the United Nations within these coordination mechanisms has enabled the Organization to play an influential role in the development process in the territories. The United Nations presence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip has increased from three organizations in 1993 to 13 in 1998. An additional 16 organizations of the United Nations system are providing technical assistance and expertise to the Palestinian Authority.

### **III. Work of local and international coordination mechanisms**

9. On 29 and 30 November 1994, the main donor-led body overseeing the assistance effort, the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, met in Brussels. At the suggestion of the United Nations representative, the Committee decided to devolve certain aspects of the donor coordination process to the level of representatives in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. For that purpose, the Committee established a Local Aid Coordination Committee, to be composed of the Palestinian Authority and all donors to the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, including Israel. The co-chairs of the Local Aid Coordination Committee are Norway, in its capacity as Chair of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories and the World Bank. The latter two also act as joint secretariat to the Local Aid Coordination Committee. Meetings of the Local Aid Coordination Committee provide a forum for donors to report on their activities and the Palestinian Authority to provide updates on the budget deficit.

10. In December 1994, the Local Aid Coordination Committee established 12 sectoral subcommittees, known as sector working groups, to focus donor assistance to the Palestinian people and to facilitate communication and coordination between the Palestinian Authority and donor countries. Each sector working group is composed of the gavel holder, normally a Palestinian ministry; the shepherd, a donor interested in that particular sector; and the United Nations or the World Bank, which acts as the secretariat. The Special Coordinator delegated secretariat responsibilities to United Nations agencies with an established presence on the

ground, namely, UNDP, UNICEF, UNRWA, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the World Health Organization (WHO) and, recently, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator also assumed secretariat responsibilities. As part of the effort to increase the efficiency of the sector working groups, a series of evaluative workshops took place in early 1997, leading to the creation of more focused sub-groups. The Palestinian Authority was closely involved with this process. The changes, including the abolition of the sector working group on transport and communications, creating sub-groups for infrastructure and for institution-building, and strengthening the role of the gavel holders, were approved by the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee in June 1997.

11. In April 1995, the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee established the Joint Liaison Committee, which provides a forum in which economic policy and practical matters related to donor assistance are discussed with the Palestinian Authority. The Joint Liaison Committee is composed of the Palestinian Authority as gavel holder; Norway, in its capacity as Chair of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, as shepherd; the United Nations and the World Bank as joint secretariat; the United States of America and the European Union. Japan was also asked to take part in the meetings. The Joint Liaison Committee discusses bilateral issues relating to donor assistance with the participation of representatives of the Government of Israel, who are invited to attend all meetings. The Joint Liaison Committee first met on 15 May 1995 and meets approximately five times a year.

12. As part of his efforts to improve United Nations coordination, the Special Coordinator convened the fourth United Nations inter-agency meeting in Gaza on 2 and 3 July 1997. Representatives of 23 agencies attended the meeting in order to forge a common development strategy in response to needs and priorities identified by the Palestinian Authority, and in coordination with the Ministry for Planning and International Cooperation and relevant ministries of the Palestinian Authority. The inter-agency meeting allowed for two days of deliberations, exchanges of views and presentations by ministers of the Palestinian Authority to provide participants with a sense of the broader political and economic framework in which the development effort is taking place in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. As was the case in previous years, the meeting provided a forum for finalizing the document entitled "United Nations programme of cooperation for the West Bank and Gaza Strip", which outlines United Nations strategies, priorities and plans for the two-year period 1998–1999.

13. The Special Coordinator also led the United Nations delegation, comprising representatives of UNRWA, UNDP, UNICEF, ILO and UNESCO, to the fifth meeting of the Consultative Group for the West Bank and Gaza Strip, convened by the World Bank in Paris on 14 and 15 December 1997. The international donor community pledged US\$ 750 million in grants, loans and equity towards development activities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip for 1998 and a further \$150 million in political risk guarantees for private investment. The Consultative Group meeting was also the occasion for the Palestinian Authority to present its first three-year rolling plan, the Palestinian Development Plan, 1998–2000, to the donor community. The Plan represents the Palestinian Authority's commitment to developing national capacity in medium-term development planning and in the implementation of development projects. The Plan also reflects the deep commitment of the United Nations family to the socio-economic development of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The United Nations is involved as donor or implementing partner in 102 out of a total number of 658 projects in the Plan project catalogue, with a combined value of approximately \$224 million.

#### **IV. Living conditions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip**

14. The pattern of economic growth and development in the West Bank and Gaza Strip has been largely conditioned by the Israeli economy. The results of the integration of the West Bank and Gaza Strip into the Israeli economy have included significant labour flows from the former to the latter, a narrow range of Palestinian exports, and a large flow of Israeli exports to the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Until the early 1990s, average Palestinian incomes and living levels grew significantly, but market forces and Israeli policies created distortions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip labour, land and capital markets, thus reducing the viability of Palestinian agriculture, manufacturing and services. The one-sided relationship also left the Palestinian economy vulnerable to external shocks, such as civil unrest, curfews, Israeli recessions and closures.

15. The Palestinian economy has been severely affected by Israeli closures. Since 1992, the gross national product (GNP) of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the broadest measure of national income, has declined by approximately 20 per cent. Falling GNP and population growth have reduced per capita income by about one third to an estimated US\$ 1,600. The decline in per capita income was very pronounced in 1996. Per capita GNP fell by an estimated 8.6 per cent,

while per capita gross domestic product (GDP) dropped by 7.4 per cent, reflecting the effects of the extended closures, which disrupted about 30 per cent of normal working days during the year. However, in the second half of 1996 economic conditions began to improve, until the August–September 1997 closures.

16. In addition to a decline in the aggregate income of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the employment situation and the standard of living have also deteriorated. Between 1992 and 1996, the unemployment rate has grown from approximately 10 to 30 per cent, with significantly higher rates during periods of closure. The decline in the purchasing power of wages has been a main feature of economic life in the past three years. Wages for Palestinian workers fell during the period 1995–1997, while the average price level has risen 6 to 12 per cent each year since 1992. The combined effect of a decline in wages and an increase in the price level has adversely affected Palestinian household living levels. Palestinian households have responded by reducing their average monthly expenditures by about 16 per cent over the past two years. In addition, investment levels have dropped dramatically in the same period, mainly due to the uncertain political situation and Israeli measures undermining investor confidence.

17. In 1997, there was a recovery in labour and commodity flows from the West Bank and Gaza Strip to Israel. Labour flows grew more than anticipated in the initial estimates of the Palestinian Authority Ministry of Finance and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Licensed monthly average labour flows from the West Bank and Gaza Strip to Israel were about 15 per cent higher in 1997 than in 1996, at approximately 38,000 workers. Commercial truck exports from the West Bank and Gaza Strip were, on a monthly basis, about 1.5 per cent higher than in 1996. This indicates that the Palestinian economy has the capacity for recovery and growth in the absence of severe and extended closures. The Government of Israel also eased restrictions on the movement of goods and persons. However, despite improvements in labour and commodity flows, as well as marginal reductions in unemployment and underemployment, per capita income levels registered further declines in 1997. Continuing the trend witnessed since 1992, population growth exceeded income growth, resulting in falling average incomes.

18. In 1995 and 1996, the Palestinian Authority was compelled to divert funds from public investment to public consumption to counter closure-related economic and social emergencies. The relative stabilization in the movement of goods and persons during 1997 led to a corresponding stabilization in tax revenues and improved public finances; the recurrent budget of the Palestinian Authority for 1998

envisages no deficit, unlike in 1996 and 1997. However, donor disbursements in 1997, at \$432 million, were 21.3 per cent below their 1996 level and about 15 per cent below average annual disbursements for the period 1994–1996.

19. The modest economic improvements in 1997, taken together with the expected expansion in Palestinian public investment in the coming year, promise better results in 1998. However, significant economic and social progress depends principally upon meaningful advancement in the Israeli-Palestinian track of the peace process. Such political progress must entail greater Palestinian access to vital resources, such as land and water, and to external markets for inputs and exports. This would create a more stable environment, enhance private investment and generate economic growth and employment.

## V. The private sector

20. In the long term, economic growth and development will be generated by the private sector. Excluding agriculture, there are over 50,000 individual private establishments in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, principally small, sole proprietorships with average capitalization levels of approximately \$10,000. Commerce and services make up 75 per cent of these businesses, with capitalization levels of approximately \$5,300 per business, while manufacturing accounts for up to 20 per cent, with average capitalization levels of approximately \$27,000. The relatively large number of commerce and service businesses account for about 50 per cent of the value of privately produced output, with manufacturing accounting for about 20 per cent of such output. Average annual output per worker in the private sector is about \$7,000 and evidence shows that output per worker increases with greater amounts of capital invested per worker. However, greater amounts of invested capital do not appear to produce proportional increases in worker output, indicating that better management and marketing techniques may be needed to allow Palestinian businesses to take full advantage of additional capital investment.

21. In addition, while the average rate of return on invested capital is approximately 58 per cent, the return is much below this in the manufacturing sector and considerably above this in commerce and services establishments. In general, smaller firms have higher rates of return, perhaps owing to their ability to more easily adapt production and sales to political turbulence, such as closures, and to other obstacles in the economic environment. This would indicate that the development of the manufacturing sector, in particular, will require more stable political conditions for investment

planning. A survey of private sector specialists in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, undertaken by the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories, found near unanimity in the view that closures and the unclear business operating environment are the main problems facing private businesses. The majority also indicated that better management and planning techniques, and better market access, were the most important things needed to develop private businesses. However, most were generally positive about business prospects in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, given the development of the proper enabling environment, political stability and freedom of movement of persons and goods

## **VI. Assistance to the Palestinian people: ongoing programmes, unmet needs and proposals for additional assistance**

22. After consultations with the programmes and agencies of the United Nations system active in the area (a list of which appears in the annex to the present report), the Special Coordinator prepared the following update on assistance received by the Palestinian people in the occupied territories during the reporting period, June 1997 to May 1998, from United Nations agencies and programmes, together with an analysis of needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them.

### **Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat**

23. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs has been involved in the West Bank and Gaza Strip since 1995 when five project documents were formulated, comprising a comprehensive package of assistance to the Palestinian Authority in the area of public finance and business development. In February 1997, the project to strengthen audit capability received funding from UNDP as a component of a three-year programme on governance and public administration and was implemented. In December 1997, another project on aid management, coordination and accountability was included in the Palestinian Development Plan, 1998–2000.

### **Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia**

24. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) has focused its activities on supporting the economic and social sectors in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, as well as monitoring their development through the provision of advisory services and technical assistance and the preparation of reports and studies. In December 1997, ESCWA convened a meeting at Bir Zeit University to assess the role of non-governmental organizations in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in the fields of health, agriculture and small business enterprises and to identify new areas of cooperation between non-governmental organizations and the Palestinian Authority. The Palestinian Authority was also invited to participate in two ESCWA expert group meetings held in Kuwait and Beirut in late 1997 on the implications of the World Trade Organization Agreement, and the institutional aspects of privatization, for ESCWA member countries. In addition, an expert group meeting on the impact of the peace process was convened in June 1997 to review Arab-Israeli industrial relations, and a subsequent study analysed the changes that have taken place in the trade, financial and industrial sectors of selected ESCWA countries. ESCWA has also secured funds for a project to establish a database on Palestinian refugees in the Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon and is cooperating with the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) in initiating and implementing the project. Other advisory services included assistance to the PCBS for a workshop on the demographic and economic conditions of the Palestinian community in Lebanon; drafting a project document on a comprehensive statistical plan for the Palestinian communities in Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic; and a paper on the emerging issues relating to international trade centres and the implications for the Palestinian economy, in cooperation with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), UNDP and the Palestinian Authority.

### **Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations**

25. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) continued its assistance to the Ministry of Agriculture in the field of agricultural policy analysis and planning by means of a technical assistance project funded through UNDP. Funds were provided for the training of 10 Gaza fishermen in swordfish-catching techniques, organized in Cyprus in collaboration with the non-governmental



organization CARE International and the Department of Fisheries of Cyprus. At the request of the Ministry of Agriculture and UNDP, FAO organized a seminar on food security programming and a two-week training workshop on food security policy analysis in February 1998. A FAO/World Bank cooperative programme mission visited the West Bank and assisted the Ministry of Agriculture in preparing the agricultural infrastructure component of the agricultural sector rehabilitation project. The mission focused on increasing agricultural productivity through terracing and the construction of cisterns, and developing market access roads to increase the value of agricultural output.

### **International Atomic Energy Agency**

26. At its thirty-eighth General Conference, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) decided to identify potential technical assistance projects that could be implemented in the West Bank and Gaza Strip through appropriate international organizations. Pursuant to that decision, the IAEA Board of Governors approved two projects which are being implemented through the International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP), in Trieste, Italy. The project on manpower development aims to upgrade and strengthen technical skills and capabilities for the application of nuclear science and technology in various development sectors, while the project on building up science and technology infrastructure plans to set up a laboratory at Bethlehem University to study irradiation effects on optical fibre sensors and to raise the level of training and research in this field. To date, money has been disbursed to train Palestinian technical personnel at the ICTP laboratories, for the procurement of equipment and for arranging expert visits to the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

### **International Civil Aviation Organization**

27. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has initiated several missions to Gaza and formulated three project proposals for technical assistance to the Palestinian Civil Aviation Authority, which are still awaiting funding.

### **International Labour Organization**

28. Since 1994, ILO has mobilized over \$23 million of donor contributions for technical assistance projects. Technical cooperation has assisted in the establishment of a Department of Labour; the rehabilitation and reintegration of

ex-detainees; the establishment of a model production workshop to manufacture low-cost wheelchairs and employ disabled persons; the Palestinian Employment Programme; the establishment of a vocational rehabilitation centre; the training of small contractors; and a number of projects to assist chambers of commerce and trade unions.

29. During the period under review, ILO technical cooperation projects assisted institution-building in labour administration, employment services and occupational safety and health; vocational rehabilitation of disabled persons; and small enterprise development. The institutional framework of employers' and workers' organizations was also improved. Within the framework of the ILO global programme entitled, "More and better jobs for women", an action plan for the West Bank and Gaza Strip was formulated to address women's employment. A study on child labour in the West Bank and Gaza Strip was completed and an ad hoc mission for fact-finding and needs assessment in the field of social security was also undertaken. Disbursements of the ILO technical cooperation programme in 1997 were more than \$1.3 million.

30. ILO will continue to approach the issue of employment generation with particular reference to labour market information systems, employment and manpower policies, private sector development and employment services. ILO will also continue to attach great importance to assisting employers' and workers' organizations, with particular emphasis on institution building. Efforts will be intensified to eliminate child labour and to improve employment opportunities and equality for women. In addition, renewed emphasis will be placed on improvements in working conditions, particularly occupational safety and health, and capacity-building with respect to social security.

### **International Maritime Organization**

31. Since March 1996, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) has been implementing a regional project entitled "Development of port State control capabilities in southern and eastern Mediterranean countries", financed by the European Commission and including the Palestinian Authority as one of 11 participants. An IMO needs assessment mission visited Gaza in December 1997 to identify specific areas in which the Palestinian Authority could benefit from IMO technical assistance. The mission's findings revealed limited maritime resources and the absence of a maritime infrastructure, expertise and personnel; a shortage of adequate manpower and training facilities; and the lack of legal, organizational and administrative

departments to deal with maritime issues. The mission recommended that a maritime administration be created to introduce legal and administrative regulations, that an organized structure be set up to deal with, *inter alia*, the imminent establishment of the Gaza port authority, and that training of personnel to run the port should commence as soon as possible. In addition, IMO has submitted three new projects for the Mediterranean region to the European Commission for funding, with the Palestinian Authority as one of the participants.

### **International Trade Centre**

32. In May 1996, the International Trade Centre (ITC) began implementing a technical cooperation project for the export of selected high-value, fresh-cut flowers from the West Bank and Gaza Strip to international markets. ITC has assisted Palestinian growers and exporters in on-farm production and cold-storage techniques; post-harvest handling and quality control; export market development and marketing; trade information services; and the production of the first catalogue of Palestinian fresh-cut flowers. Achievements so far include improved quality standards, increased direct exports and revenues, and the creation and marketing abroad of an identifiable Palestinian product. Among the issues that require addressing is the need to reduce dependence on Israeli crop production inputs and facilitate the work of extension agents and financial assistance to help extend adequate facilities to flower growers.

### **International Telecommunication Union**

33. Following field missions by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in 1994 and 1995, a long-term technical assistance programme for 1996–1997 was formulated, an action plan drawn up and a senior technical expert seconded to the Palestinian Authority, whose mission concluded in September 1997. The ITU Regional Office in Cairo undertook an investigative mission to the West Bank and Gaza Strip in January 1998 in order to propose a programme of technical assistance to the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunication. The programme will include the development of a long-term master plan for telecommunications, the establishment of a telecommunications training centre and the granting of fellowships for technical training.

### **Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights**

34. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights signed a technical cooperation programme agreement with the Palestinian Authority in 1996 to provide for the implementation of a comprehensive technical cooperation programme in the field of human rights. The programme covers the period 1997–1998 for a total budget of approximately \$1.8 million. At the request of the Palestinian Authority, an addendum was included in the Palestinian Development Plan which will extend the programme to the end of 1999 at an extra cost of \$1.1 million.

35. In addition to police training, the Office conducts training-of-trainers courses, trains police commanders in the Gaza Strip and participates in bilateral police training courses. The Office has supplied equipment and documentation to the Ministry of Justice and human rights documentation materials to other Palestinian Authority institutions and non-governmental organizations, and prepared and distributed human rights guidelines to all police officials in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The Office has also funded two legal drafting fellowships for the legal staff of the Ministry of Justice and fellowships for the Presidential Adviser for Human Rights and the Legal Adviser of the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation. The Office has also contributed to the funding of the legal research and legislation drafting projects for the Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizens' Rights and the Bir Zeit University Law Centre, as well as the Commission's human rights monitoring project. In addition, the Office has funded the Women's Unit Project of the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights.

36. A major objective of the programme is to assist the Palestinian Authority in establishing a legal framework consistent with international human rights standards. Capacity-building through training, fellowships and funding is being provided as is assistance to non-governmental organizations and the Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizens' Rights. More specific needs include training in human rights for judges, prosecutors and prison personnel; training and fellowships for members of the Human Rights Committee of the Palestinian Legislative Council; training for the police in juvenile justice; strengthening the legal drafting capacity of the Ministry of Justice; support for women's rights and enactment of relevant legislation; formulation of a national plan of action for human rights; and completion of the police training programme in the West Bank. A number of the above activities are ongoing and funded under the current budget and additional activities come within the

approval to extend the current programme, for which funding is being sought.

### **United Nations Conference on Trade and Development**

37. In 1995, following its endorsement of the UNCTAD Programme of Technical Cooperation Activities in Support of Palestinian Trade, Finance and Related Services, the Palestinian Authority requested UNCTAD to extend technical assistance in specific priority areas, targeting the Palestinian private sector and institutional development. UNCTAD has since fielded over 12 advisory missions and prepared summary project proposals which have been submitted for inclusion in the Palestinian Development Plan, 1998–2000.

38. The first phase of a project for an industrial estate in Nablus is currently under implementation. It is being financed by the UNDP Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People, in close consultation with the Ministry of Industry. The project focuses on policy and regulatory options, as well as on creating the infrastructural, institutional and managerial capacities needed for the establishment and operation of the estate. A project to promote trade cooperation between the Palestinian Authority, Egypt and Jordan is due to commence in mid-1998, as is the initiation phase of a project for two private-sector-driven Palestinian trade points, to be followed by development of related institutional and operational guidelines and a detailed training programme.

39. Following UNCTAD advisory missions to strengthen the capacity of the domestic insurance sector, a set of legal, institutional, managerial and procedural measures for follow-up has been outlined. As a direct follow-up to UNCTAD/UNDP workshops in 1997 on the emerging international trading system and its implications for the Palestinian economy, the TRAINFORTRADE programme at UNCTAD was requested to provide technical assistance in human resources development for trade. The project includes the preparation of training materials and organizing TRAINFORTRADE workshops and advisory services to strengthen local training capacities. National training workshops on commercial diplomacy are being organized in 1998 by the Palestinian Authority, with support from UNCTAD, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and UNDP. UNCTAD has also outlined a number of measures for international procurement and the trading of strategic food commodities, including a seminar on commodity trading and commodity supply management. In addition, UNCTAD is studying two new requests from the Palestinian Authority for technical assistance in the areas of

debt management and financial analysis and support to small and medium-sized enterprise development.

40. Parallel with operational activities, the UNCTAD secretariat has continued its analytical work on important issues confronting the Palestinian economy. In addition to publishing two such analytical studies, the secretariat has prepared a report on its assistance to the Palestinian people, including an update on recent economic developments and performance. The programme budget for 1998–1999 focuses on rendering technical assistance to the Palestinian people in priority areas within the framework of the UNCTAD Programme of Technical Cooperation Activities, and particular attention will be given to meeting priority requests from the Palestinian Authority in the areas outlined above.

### **United Nations International Drug Control Programme**

41. The United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) focuses on a multisectoral approach to coordinate and integrate drug control policies into the broader developmental policies of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. A project entitled “Multisectoral drug control assistance to the Palestinian Authority” was signed in 1996 to provide technical assistance to establish a drug control institutional framework; to reduce the illicit supply of narcotic drugs through improved detection, interdiction and prosecution capacities; and to prevent and reduce drug abuse through improved awareness, treatment and rehabilitation methods. Subsequently, two UNDCP missions visited Gaza to review the progress of the project and accelerate implementation. As a result, the process of procuring equipment for the basic chemical laboratory is proceeding and training for two technicians has been completed. Moves to establish a drug section within the Palestinian Customs Department is also proceeding. In February 1998, a delegation of the Palestinian Anti-narcotics General Administration visited the UNDCP Regional Office in Cairo, which was established in July 1997, and a detailed review of project components and project implementation was undertaken. When completed, the project will set up a new independent Palestinian institution capable of detecting illicit drugs and establishing better control mechanisms in the border areas.

## United Nations Development Programme

42. The UNDP Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People was initiated in 1978 in response to General Assembly resolution 33/147 of 20 December 1978, in which UNDP was requested to improve the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people by identifying their social and economic needs and by establishing concrete projects to that end. UNDP project expenditures were \$33 million in 1997 and have already exceeded \$22 million in the first quarter of 1998. UNDP utilizes its core funding resources and its in-house expertise as the initial start-up investment to launch high-priority programme and project activities, which are subsequently developed and sustained largely through bilateral donor contributions. UNDP is therefore both a donor to the Palestinian people through the programming of more than \$13 million of core UNDP resources since 1994 and an implementation partner of the Palestinian Authority through the implementation of projects funded through large-scale bilateral donor contributions. Since 1994, donors have contributed more than \$180 million to UNDP programme activities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. All the projects and programmes detailed in the UNDP programme framework for 1998–2000 have been included by the Palestinian Authority in the Palestinian Development Plan, 1998–2000 either as stand-alone projects or as components of larger programmes.

43. During the reporting period, UNDP continued its advocacy role in the promotion of sustainable human development. UNDP sponsored the formulation of a National Poverty Alleviation Action Plan and continued to promote gender awareness by targeting the curriculum of the Palestinian educational system. UNDP supports participatory planning methods and the decentralization of decision-making through its large-scale Local Rural Development Programme, which focuses on improving living conditions and alleviating poverty in rural areas in the West Bank, and through its Community Development Programme, which targets vulnerable groups experiencing economic and social hardship in the Gaza Strip. As the primary capacity-building partner of Palestinian institutions such as the Palestinian Water and Environment Authorities, and through the implementation of several Global Environment Facility projects, UNDP also promotes environmental awareness and the protection of scarce natural resources, particularly water. The UNDP Governance and Public Administration Support Programme seeks to build national capacities in public sector management and administration by targeting assistance to the General Control Institution, the General Personnel Council and the Cabinet Secretariat Office.

44. To promote economic development, UNDP continued its capacity-building support to the key sectors of the Palestinian economy. Through its Agricultural Development Programme, UNDP provided large-scale assistance at both the ministerial and field levels. UNDP also continued its support to the tourism sector by providing capacity-building assistance to the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities in the areas of policy formulation, sectoral planning, human resources development and tourism awareness and marketing. A number of ongoing projects concentrate on the rehabilitation of archaeological sites to promote the West Bank and Gaza Strip as a tourism destination, encourage employment and increase Palestinian awareness of their cultural heritage. UNDP is also supporting the Bethlehem 2000 project, which will provide a unique opportunity to focus attention on the potential for tourism.

45. The UNDP Infrastructure Rehabilitation Programme focuses on the urgent need for the rehabilitation of existing education and health facilities, public buildings and water and waste-water networks. All such projects are implemented by UNDP through Palestinian private sector contractors, in close partnership with the Palestinian Authority. Much of the infrastructure rehabilitation activities of UNDP utilize labour-intensive methods to help alleviate unemployment in the Gaza Strip and West Bank, constituting part of the UNDP large-scale Employment Generation Programme.

46. UNDP has also expanded its United Nations Volunteers Programme. The National United Nations Volunteers Programme was launched in August 1996 and now accounts for 37 of the 52 United Nations Volunteers currently in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The Community-based Youth Participation and Development Project, which targets the refugee population, involves capacity-building in nine youth and women's centres in the Gaza Strip, with particular emphasis on female and disabled youth. The United Nations Volunteers' White Helmets Initiative is involved in producing detailed urban development plans for the municipalities of Gaza, Khan Younis and Rafah, working closely with local counterparts to ensure local capacity-building. Another White Helmets Initiative team of sports experts is cooperating with the Ministry of Youth and Sports and local youth centres, concentrating on physical education at the school level and the creation of football and volleyball clubs, as well as coaching the Palestinian football team.

47. UNDP will also continue to assist the Palestinian Authority in the area of development planning and aid coordination. A primary objective is to ensure a commonly recognized overall framework for development planning which can direct both domestic resources and donor assistance to the highest priority needs. Towards this end,

UNDP, in close cooperation with the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories, has been actively assisting the Palestinian Authority in its efforts to produce the Palestinian Development Plan, 1998–2000, by helping line ministries and institutions to formulate sectoral strategies and priorities and by assisting the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation to harmonize and unify such plans. In addition, to meet the need for enhanced counterpart capacity-building, UNDP will continue to utilize joint implementation structures in many of its programme activities, whereby the long-term sustainability and accountability of local counterparts and other local implementation partners is combined with the technical, supervisory and managerial expertise of UNDP. This allows for a progressive transfer of technical and managerial implementation responsibilities from UNDP to Palestinian counterpart institutions through support, advice, technical supervision and on-the-job training. Finally, in the area of United Nations coordination, UNDP works closely with the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories, and plays an active role in the donor coordination mechanisms. Owing to the local circumstances, UNDP also provides full administrative and logistical support to more than 10 United Nations organizations currently operating in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

### **United Nations Environment Programme**

48. A preparatory assistance project for environmental planning and management support to the Gaza municipality was developed by the joint United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)/United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) (UNCHS) Sustainable Cities Programme. The objective is to prepare a Gaza City environmental profile focusing on priority areas, to draft a long-term programme document and to support start-up activities. As a follow-up, the Mayor of Gaza participated in the second annual meeting of the Sustainable Cities Programme and the Urban Environment Forum, both held in China in October 1997.

### **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization**

49. UNESCO has undertaken a programme of cooperation with the Palestinian people since 1974. In April 1994, a Plan of Action was prepared by the joint UNESCO/Palestinian Coordination Committee which was translated into a Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People,

containing 27 projects. The second phase of the Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People, entitled “Development for peace”, composed of 12 new projects, was agreed in May 1997 and a UNESCO Liaison Office was opened in the West Bank in the same month.

50. The Bethlehem 2000 roving photographic exhibition was inaugurated in June 1997 and an appeal was launched to finance projects contained in the Emergency Action Plan for Bethlehem, prepared by UNESCO and approved by the Palestinian Authority. The Plan comprises approximately 100 projects in the areas of culture, infrastructure, economy and tourism, with a view to restoring and developing Bethlehem and its surroundings. UNESCO, in partnership with the Palestinian Authority, the European Commission, UNDP and the World Bank, organized an international donors conference in Brussels in May 1998 where the Action Plan was presented.

51. In the field of education, a total of 25 scholarships were granted to Palestinian students and a scholarship in educational policy formulation to an official of the Ministry of Education. Two high-level seminars and three courses in educational planning and budgeting were held in Ramallah and Gaza. Under the Palestinian European Academic Cooperation in Education (PEACE) programme, co-sponsored by UNESCO and the European Union, the implementation of projects for higher education was accelerated and six scholarships were renewed. A UNESCO chair in human rights, democracy and peace was established at An-Najah University, Nablus, a physical learning environment project was launched and the model kindergarten project in Gaza can now accommodate 50 children. UNESCO has undertaken to furnish and equip the offices of the Ministry of Higher Education, and the Government of Saudi Arabia has agreed to finance the rehabilitation of a further 20 schools in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In addition, two multi-purpose community resource centres were set up in Gaza and Nablus, restoration of the mosaics in Hisham’s Palace in Jericho commenced and a workshop has been organized to train Palestinians in mosaic restoration.

### **United Nations Population Fund**

52. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) first extended assistance to the Palestinian people in 1986 in cooperation with WHO. UNFPA assistance was provided on a project-by-project basis until 1996, when the first UNFPA Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People, 1996–1999, was developed for a total of \$7.2 million.

53. UNFPA addresses basic needs in three core areas. In reproductive health, the programme aims at developing the capacity of the Women's Health and Development Directorate of the Ministry of Health to better develop, coordinate and monitor the implementation of women's health policies. UNFPA is also assisting the Directorate and the Ministry of Health's Primary Health-care Departments in integrating reproductive health services, including family planning, into primary health-care clinics in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In addition, support for running a women's centre for health care, social assistance, legal counselling and community education in the Bureij camp and for establishing a similar centre in the Jabalia camp is ongoing. Furthermore, UNFPA is supporting a community-based reproductive health education project in the northern West Bank, to raise awareness of reproductive health issues among men and women and to strengthen the capacity of 30 primarily non-governmental organization-run clinics for the provision of reproductive health services and information.

54. In the area of population and development strategies, UNFPA has provided assistance to the Palestinian Authority in carrying out the first Palestinian Population and Housing Census in December 1997, making reliable data on the composition and characteristics of the Palestinian population available to development planners. In addition, as a follow-up to the census, UNFPA is seeking funds to assist the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics in ensuring the proper analysis, dissemination and utilization of the census findings. In the area of advocacy for reproductive health and gender issues, UNFPA is targeting decision makers, religious leaders, youth and the mass media, through assistance to the Health Education and Promotion Department at the Ministry of Health. In addition, population education is being addressed at the Ministry of Education through the provision of technical assistance, training and materials production.

### **United Nations Children's Fund**

55. With the Palestinian Authority assuming greater responsibility for the social sector, the UNICEF Programme of Cooperation in 1997 expanded as a bridging programme. Given the transition from relief to development, service delivery to provide rehabilitation support was coupled with capacity-building for medium-term to long-term development. The overall emphasis of the programme included advocacy and capacity-building for project development and monitoring, utilizing indicators relating to the rights and needs of children and women. The sectoral projects on health and nutrition, basic education and community development

were prioritized with specific interventions on primary health care, psycho-social health, early childhood development, primary education, non-formal education and life skills. The UNICEF programme was implemented within the framework of the National Programme of Action for Palestinian Children and Women, 1996–2000, formulated by an inter-ministerial steering committee. Programme objectives incorporated the articles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the goals arising from the World Summit for Children. The total budget for 1997 amounted to \$3.5 million, of which 72 per cent was supplementary funds and the remainder from UNICEF general resources.

56. Programme implementation in 1997 was satisfactory, despite the problems posed by security restrictions that continued to adversely affect programme delivery. There was difficulty in raising donor support for lower-profile projects and for projects that rely on human resources and staff capacity rather than on infrastructure and supplies. Among the encouraging trends, however, was the Palestinian Authority's increased commitment to programmes for children and women and the promotion of the goals of the National Programme of Action for Palestinian Children and Women, 1996–2000, on the part of the Secretariat for Children. The High Council for Childhood and Motherhood was established and a Child Monitoring Unit at the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics was initiated to develop a database and facilitate analysis.

57. The situation of children in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, as indicated by infant and child mortality, nutrition, literacy and education levels, appears relatively satisfactory in comparison with countries of similar per capita incomes. Although the Palestinian Authority cannot ratify international conventions, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women have been endorsed and feature well in advocacy and programming. Many of the mid-decade goals of the World Summit for Children have been met but progress towards the end-decade goals poses a major challenge. Issues such as children with special needs, maternal and women's health and problems of adolescents and youth need greater attention. There is also the need for disparity reduction in terms of region and gender as well as improving the quality of basic services. Donor support is further needed to enhance and sustain the commitment and the capacity of the Palestinian Authority to promote programmes for children, youth and women and to raise funds for these target groups. In addition, coordinated efforts by United Nations agencies will assist UNICEF in advocacy and capacity-building.

## **United Nations Industrial Development Organization**

58. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) provides technical assistance in private-sector development for industry, small and medium-sized enterprises, human resources development and technology. In 1997, UNIDO continued to implement a project for the integrated development of the building materials and construction industry in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. A project document for the second stage, the establishment of a Palestinian Construction Resources Centre, has been completed. To support the development of small and medium-sized enterprises, technical experts provided assistance to garment enterprises in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and furnished proposals for additional assistance. Counterpart organizations in Italy have expressed interest in similar activities for the Palestinian leather and footwear and marble and stone industries. To promote the application of renewable energy, the Australian Centre for the Application of Solar Energy has assisted in a report and study and is currently preparing a project document for a broader programme of solar energy development. To address additional needs, a detailed package of services has been identified and presented in the UNIDO Support Programme for Palestinian Industry, 1998–2000, comprising policy advice and monitoring; institutional capacity-building; small and medium-sized enterprises promotion; environmental activities; and investment promotion. Seven of the projects included in the Support Programme have been included in the project list of the Palestinian Development Plan, 1998–2000.

## **United Nations Development Fund for Women**

59. The activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) in the West Bank and Gaza Strip since 1993 aim at strengthening the capacity of governmental and non-governmental organizations to mainstream gender-related issues in national planning and the state-building process. Since 1997, UNIFEM has been providing assistance to the Palestinian people through three projects: a post-Beijing follow-up operation; the women in development facilitation initiative; and the enterprise development project for women in the Gaza Strip.

60. As part of its Beijing follow-up activities, a project was launched in April 1996 covering five countries in the Western Asia region to ensure the implementation of the Platform for Action adopted in Beijing, assisting national committees to

prepare national strategies for the advancement of women. UNIFEM national counterparts, the Palestinian Authority Inter-Ministerial Coordinating Committee and the General Union of Palestinian Women, produced a coordinated strategy for Palestinian women. UNIFEM has prepared a proposal for phase II of the project to be carried out by the same partners to enable the committees to carry out and implement the national work plans. The women in development facilitation initiative in the West Bank and Gaza Strip is an information collection and dissemination project involving the Palestinian Authority and international and Palestinian non-governmental organizations and donors, with the ultimate aim of promoting more effective coordination and use of funds. During the pilot phase, the project published two newsletters on women in development issues, conducted workshops and set up a computerized database on women's activities, projects and programmes. The second phase of the project commenced in November 1997 with the addition of two project assistants.

61. Since 1996, UNIFEM has also initiated pilot activities for the economic empowerment of women in the Gaza Strip, in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs. The approach focuses on enterprise development through the creation of entrepreneurial awareness, skills training, institutional capacity-building and the establishment and strengthening of support services for women entrepreneurs. Business awareness and start-your-own-business training courses were conducted during 1997 in addition to a number of follow-up business counselling meetings. The pilot project brought together the resources and expertise of UNDP, the World Food Programme (WFP), ESCWA and others, and revealed outstanding needs in skills training, credit, marketing and business counselling. A second phase of the project was launched in January 1998 to support women's economic empowerment through increasing the number of successful women-owned enterprises. The services include training, business counselling, market research and credit accessibility.

## **United Nations Institute for Training and Research**

62. Since 1995, UNITAR has been engaged in the provision of training and other support programmes to the various agencies of the Palestinian Authority and has conducted 11 workshops for more than 200 participants. During the reporting period, workshops were held in the management of governmental institutions, geographical information systems and project management. Based on participant evaluations and surveys, training programmes have been proposed and designed in management

development; financial management and auditing for middle-level and senior management in the Ministry of Finance and the General Control Institute; and statistics, to strengthen the technical capacity of the Palestinian Statistical Training Centre at the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. UNITAR will appoint a part-time director at the Statistical Training Centre to oversee training programmes for Palestinian Authority officials.

### **United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East**

63. The total number of refugees served by UNRWA in the West Bank and Gaza Strip was 1,308,438, of whom 562,142 were living in 27 refugee camps. The Agency operates or sponsors 387 such facilities and employs 9,026 staff, over 99 per cent of whom are locally recruited Palestinians. The operational character of the Agency's activities differs from that of other United Nations organizations, which for the most part work through the Palestinian Authority or local executing agencies.

64. In the education sector, the Agency's 267 elementary and preparatory schools accommodated 200,886 pupils in the 1997/98 school year, an increase of 12,298 over the previous year. Despite progress in construction and upgrading, lack of funds and sites meant that many schools had to be accommodated in unsatisfactory rented premises, suffered from overcrowding, or were in need of maintenance. To accommodate additional refugee pupils, the Agency continued to rely on contract teachers. Owing to funding shortfalls, UNRWA remained unable to extend the basic education cycle in the West Bank from 9 to 10 years to maintain conformity with the Palestinian Authority education system. The Agency's four vocational and technical training centres provided a variety of programmes for 2,030 trainees. In addition to regular in-service staff training programmes, the Educational Sciences Faculty (ESF) at the Ramallah training centres offered pre-service teacher training leading to a first university degree for 600 trainees. Compensatory ESF classes for Gaza students unable to obtain permits to attend upper-level courses at the Ramallah training centres were concluded in August 1997, after all students had graduated from the programme. Scholarships were awarded to 398 Palestine refugee students for study at universities in the region. The Agency's 1998 education budget for the West Bank and Gaza Strip was \$78.9 million, although estimated annual expenditure was only \$72.9 million, owing to austerity and other cost-reduction measures.

65. In the health sector, UNRWA operated 51 health facilities which provided comprehensive primary health care and handled 3.8 million patient visits in 1997. Rehabilitation services were provided through 12 physiotherapy clinics. Secondary care was made available to refugee patients through a combination of contractual agreements with non-governmental and private hospitals and partial reimbursement of treatment costs, and directly at the Agency's 43-bed Qalqilia hospital in the West Bank. The Agency implemented an earlier decision to adjust the co-payment rate at Qalqilia hospital to bring it into line with the rate applied at contracted hospitals, in order to maintain essential in-patient services in the face of rising hospitalization costs. In addition to several projects to extend or improve internal sewerage schemes in camps, environmental health services included sewage disposal, management of storm-water runoff, provision of safe drinking water, collection and disposal of refuse and control of insect and rodent infestation. Work continued on the 232-bed European Gaza Hospital which, upon completion, will be handed over to the Palestinian Authority. An affiliated Gaza College of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences will help to provide qualified staff for the hospital. In October 1997, the Palestinian Authority, the European Community and UNRWA signed a memorandum of understanding establishing a hospital project board and agreeing that an international management team would carry out the pre-commissioning and commissioning of the hospital. The Agency's 1998 health budget for the West Bank and Gaza Strip was \$27.4 million, although estimated annual expenditure was only \$22.8 million, owing to austerity and other cost-reduction measures.

66. In the relief and social services sector, the Agency's special hardship programme provided direct material and financial assistance to 94,990 eligible refugees, an increase of 5,710 over the previous year. The high proportion of cases in Gaza was indicative of poor socio-economic conditions there. UNRWA sponsored 24 women's programmes, 16 community rehabilitation and 25 youth activity centres, plus a rehabilitation centre for the visually impaired in Gaza. The Agency's 1998 relief and social services budget in the West Bank and Gaza Strip was \$13.5 million, although estimated annual expenditure was only \$9.3 million, again owing to austerity and other cost-reduction measures.

67. UNRWA continued its implementation of the Peace Implementation Programme, an initiative launched in 1993 to help make the results of the Middle East peace process felt at the local level. Through the Programme, the Agency seeks to improve infrastructure, create employment and enhance socio-economic conditions within the Palestine refugee community in the Agency's five fields of operation, but there



was a marked decline in pledges and contributions as compared with previous years. UNRWA also continued to operate an income-generation programme to create job opportunities and alleviate poverty by making credit available to small businesses and micro-enterprises through revolving loan funds established with project contributions. Established in 1991 in response to deteriorating socio-economic conditions and rising unemployment, the programme had by 31 December 1997 provided a total of \$20.3 million in loans at commercial interest rates to 10,229 enterprises, while achieving repayment rates approaching 100 per cent. A sister programme to the successful micro-enterprise credit programme in Gaza was launched in the West Bank in March 1998.

68. The Agency's work in the West Bank and Gaza Strip continued to be affected by the continuing financial crisis facing UNRWA since 1993, as a result of repeated shortfalls in funding for the regular budget combined with increasing refugee needs. These shortfalls necessitated the introduction of a series of austerity measures to bring expenditure in line with income and reduce deficit amounts. The Agency was consequently unable to expand services at a rate commensurate with growth in the registered refugee population, and experienced a deterioration in the quality of services as a result of overburdening staff and facilities. In August 1997, the Agency was obliged to introduce an additional round of austerity measures which represented a direct reduction in services. Following receipt of additional pledges, the Agency was able to cancel implementation of some of those measures. However, other measures had to be retained and extended throughout 1998, owing to the continued financial crisis facing the Agency. In addition, constraints on Agency field and headquarters operations arising from security-related measures imposed by the Israeli authorities remained a matter of concern.

### **Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories**

69. In addition to its support, outlined above, to the work of local and international mechanisms, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories continued to coordinate bilateral and multilateral training programmes for the Palestinian Police Force. The main objective has been to help transform international training efforts into a longer-term framework to enable the police force to undertake its own specialized training. A joint formulation team produced a final report concerning the establishment of a police academy in Jericho. Thirty-seven

specialized training courses took place in the West Bank and Gaza for some 900 policemen, designed to meet needs identified by the Palestinian Police Force and expressed to the international community through the sector working group on the police, for which the Office serves as secretariat. The Office also provides support services to donors in this area, including the facilitation and briefing of visiting missions and trainers, as well as assisting in the monitoring, follow-up and evaluation of courses.

70. The Economic and Social Monitoring Unit continued to publish periodic reports on economic and social conditions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, in addition to a special report on the Palestinian private sector. The Office's legal adviser coordinated development in the rule of law sector through the preparation of appropriate documents, including a survey on assistance to the sector, which was published in July 1997. The Office is currently updating its database on non-governmental organizations in preparation for a second updated edition of the Directory of non-governmental organizations in the Gaza Strip. Work is also under way on a Directory of non-governmental organizations in the West Bank, also to be published in 1998. There are also plans to bring out a second revised edition of the Directory of non-governmental organizations in donor countries: assistance to the Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, which provides comprehensive profiles of approximately 180 international organizations and the sectors in which they are involved in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

### **World Food Programme**

71. Beginning in 1994, WFP has concentrated its activities in the Gaza Strip, with poverty alleviation and social relief interventions aimed at the most severe hardship cases, mainly from the non-refugee population. The WFP budget for the reporting period is estimated at \$4 million.

72. In line with the WFP mission statement to address the urgent food security needs of poor households, in-kind assistance was provided to 12,000 ultra-poor households in the Gaza Strip, registered as social hardship cases with the Ministry of Social Affairs. Because of spiralling inflation and the rising cost of basic commodities, such food rations constitute a valuable income transfer to beneficiaries and an essential complement to the cash stipend received under the Ministry of Social Affairs social safety-net scheme. In addition, WFP provided emergency food assistance to 2,000 poor families in the West Bank, in response to a special request from the Ministry to assist rural families severely

affected by repeated border closures and prolonged unemployment. Over 65 per cent of the households supported by WFP are headed by women. In addition, 50 women from low-income households participate in a food-for-work scheme as volunteers assisting project staff in the distribution of food commodities.

73. About 10 per cent of allocated project resources have been earmarked to support local non-governmental organizations active in the health and social sectors and 10 non-governmental organizations in Gaza have received such assistance during the past year. Special food-for-work schemes have enabled such organizations to hire and retain needed staff and volunteers and to improve their community outreach services. WFP has also implemented a pilot agricultural project targeting 500 small farmers in the southern Gaza Strip, whereby food commodities have been distributed to beneficiaries against a cash payment representing less than 30 per cent of the local market value of the donated commodities. Such food aid has improved the household food security of the target group and the funds generated are utilized for the purchase of agricultural inputs and for community development. In addition to in-kind assistance, the WFP direct cash contribution to the project has been used to support capacity-building of the Ministry of Social Affairs and to upgrade and repair existing storage facilities in Gaza.

74. Implementation of project activities proceeded satisfactorily and met defined objectives in terms of beneficiary targeting and outreach services. The Programme's internal evaluation of its assistance to the non-governmental organization sector has led to a redirection of programmes towards development-oriented activities. The assessment of the agriculture pilot scheme recommended the extension of WFP support for agriculture activities for another year and the inclusion of a new group of farmers.

75. WFP assistance for 1998–1999 consists of a two-year project at an estimated cost of \$7 million, which was approved by the WFP Executive Board in October 1997. The new project will support the social safety-net programme of the Ministry of Social Affairs. Approximately 15,000 ultra-poor households in the Gaza Strip and 7,000 in the West Bank will benefit from WFP food aid. Assistance to non-governmental organizations will be strengthened and will focus on food-for-work schemes and gender-related activities. WFP will also support 1,000 small-scale farmers in the southern Gaza Strip and the Jordan valley.

## **World Health Organization**

76. In the year under review, WHO provided technical and material assistance to the Palestinian Authority and to other institutions involved in the health sector. Particular attention was paid to basic health needs and to local health development issues arising from the deteriorating economic situation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In particular, attention was devoted to the development and identification of public health programmes and to enhanced coordination with other organizations involved in the health sector.

77. At the request of the Ministry of Health, WHO set up a task force for the development of indicators for the Palestinian health system and provided assistance to UNFPA for two reproductive health programmes. On the basis of earlier WHO work, WHO and UNDP assisted the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Health in developing an eight-year plan to control brucellosis in both the human and animal populations. A situational analysis of the pharmaceutical sector was carried out by staff of the Ministry of Health under the supervision and assistance of WHO, and a list of essential drugs which closely adheres to the WHO model list has been drafted. The Palestinian Essential Drug Programme has continued the activities started earlier in 1996.

78. Two consultants carried out a training course to demonstrate simple and inexpensive techniques for the treatment of caries and donated relevant equipment. As part of the same initiative, an assessment was carried out on the feasibility of carrying out an oral health programme and a fellowship was granted to a staff member of the Ministry of Health to develop plans for the improvement of oral health. A consultant has been seconded to the Department of Community Health at Bir Zeit University to assist in developing the curriculum for a diploma course in primary health care. Key staff from the Ministry of Health and the Palestinian Red Crescent Society attended training courses to advance local planning and managerial capacity to cope with emergencies. WHO also supported a project to develop the Central Public Health Laboratory by identifying essential activities, such as the training of environmental health inspectors and of laboratory staff. Equipment was provided to the Public Health Laboratory in Gaza.

79. In collaboration with the Ministry of Health and the World Bank, a study on the medium-term development strategy and public financing priorities for the health sector was completed. Several recommendations have been adopted in the process of preparing the five-year National Health Plan. The International Initiative against Avoidable Disablement (IMPACT) programme, a joint WHO/ UNDP/ UNICEF global undertaking, examined strategies with the Ministry of Health and other concerned parties for launching disability

prevention activities. In addition, the Ministry of Health and other health institutions were provided with WHO publications, office and surgical equipment and audio-visual training materials.

80. The development of the Palestinian health system is taking place in a complex socio-political situation where the present economic realities disappoint Palestinian expectations and demands. Reinforcing and developing the most basic cost-effective programmes and services is a priority need if an efficient health system is to emerge. Among the most urgent needs are rehabilitation of the extended programme of immunization (EPI) cold chain; rehabilitation and upgrading of primary health-care services; premises upgrading; improving working arrangements and referral practices; standardization of clinical practices and more decentralized financial arrangements; development and adoption of a national drug policy; and prevention of chronic diseases such as diabetes and hypertension, together with anti-smoking and accident prevention campaigns. WHO is actively working with the Ministry of Health and the donor community in developing programmes and activities for addressing the above needs.

## **Annex**

### **United Nations entities active in the occupied territories**

Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat  
Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia  
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations  
International Atomic Energy Agency  
International Civil Aviation Organization  
International Fund for Agricultural Development  
International Labour Organization  
International Maritime Organization  
International Telecommunication Union  
International Trade Centre  
United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)  
United Nations Children's Fund  
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development  
United Nations Development Fund for Women  
United Nations Development Programme  
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization  
United Nations Environment Programme  
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights  
United Nations Industrial Development Organization  
United Nations Institute for Training and Research  
United Nations International Drug Control Programme  
United Nations Population Fund  
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East  
Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories  
United Nations Volunteers  
Universal Postal Union  
World Food Programme  
World Health Organization

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**Strengthening of the coordination of  
humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of  
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economic assistance: assistance to the  
Palestinian people**

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Item 9 of the provisional agenda\*\***  
**Implementation of the Declaration on the  
Granting of Independence to Colonial  
Countries and Peoples by the specialized  
agencies and the international institutions  
associated with the United Nations**

## Assistance to the Palestinian people

### Report of the Secretary-General

#### I. Introduction

1. On 7 December 1998, the General Assembly adopted resolution 53/89 on assistance to the Palestinian people, in which it, *inter alia*, stressed the importance of the work done by the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories; urged Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions; called upon relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in accordance with the Palestinian priorities set forth

by the Palestinian Authority, with emphasis on national execution and capacity-building; called upon the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs; suggested the convening in 1999 of a United Nations-sponsored seminar on the Palestinian economy; and requested that the Secretary-General submit a report to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the resolution, containing: (a) an assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people; and (b) an assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them.

2. In his previous report on assistance to the Palestinian people (A/53/153–E/1998/75), the Secretary-General provided an overview of the period from June 1997 until May 1998. The present report covers the period from June 1998 through May 1999. In addition, in response to Economic and Social Council resolution 1998/32, paragraph 8 in which, *inter alia*, the Council called upon the Secretary-General to “continue to include, in the report of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories, an update on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in

\* A/54/50.

\*\* E/1999/100 and Add.1.

collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies”, chapter IV below on living conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory has been included.

3. Throughout the period under review, the Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories, Chinmaya R. Gharekhan, maintained his efforts to fulfil the mandates of his office, and focused on continuing preoccupations relating to facilitating the socio-economic development of the occupied Palestinian territory, including:

(a) Ensuring better coordination between the relevant institutions of the Palestinian Authority and United Nations agencies as well as the donor community;

(b) Strengthening the rule of law and other institution-building programmes, through better-targeted technical assistance, including to the Palestinian Police Forces, in order that greater progress could be made towards achieving sustainable development;

(c) Monitoring and documenting economic and social conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory and providing periodic analyses on these aspects and special reports on specific issues relevant to the development effort, such as the prospects for growth in the private sector and the constraints thereon;

(d) Providing logistic and other assistance to the Palestinian Authority pertaining to the preparation of the Palestinian Development Plan, 1999–2003;

(e) Encouraging expeditious donor disbursements to facilitate the implementation of the Palestinian Development Plan, 1999–2003.

## II. Background

4. Since its inception in 1994, the Office of the Special Coordinator, has been among those parties that have been instrumental in establishing the donor coordination mechanisms described below, which have brought together the Palestinian Authority, the United Nations, the World Bank and the donor community. The unique position of the United Nations within these coordination mechanisms has enabled the Organization to play an influential role in the development process in the territories. The United Nations presence in the occupied Palestinian territory has increased from three organizations in 1993 to 13 in 1999. An additional 16 organizations of the United Nations system are providing the Palestinian Authority with technical assistance and expertise.

5. On 30 November 1998, the Conference to Support Middle East Peace and Development, held in Washington,

D.C., provided a forum for the international community, including the United Nations, to reaffirm political commitment to the Middle East peace process and to continue the economic assistance required to give it momentum. Conference participants announced pledges totalling \$3.36 billion to be disbursed over a two- to five-year period.

## III. Work of local and international coordination mechanisms

6. At the suggestion of the United Nations representative, the main donor-led body overseeing the assistance effort, the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee decided in November 1994, to devolve certain aspects of the donor coordination process to the level of representatives in the occupied Palestinian territory. For that purpose, the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee established a Local Aid Coordination Committee, to be composed of the Palestinian Authority and all donors to the occupied Palestinian territory, including Israel. The co-chairs of the Local Aid Coordination Committee are Norway, in its capacity as Chair of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, the Office of the Special Coordinator and the World Bank. The latter two also act as a joint secretariat to the Local Aid Coordination Committee. Meetings of the Local Aid Coordination Committee provide a forum for donors to report on their activities and for the Palestinian Authority to provide updates on relevant issues.

7. In December 1994, the Local Aid Coordination Committee had established 12 sectoral subcommittees, known as sector working groups, to focus donor assistance to the Palestinian people and to facilitate communication and coordination between the Palestinian Authority and donor countries. Each sector working group is composed of the gavel-holder, normally a Palestinian ministry; the shepherd, a donor interested in that particular sector; and the United Nations or the World Bank as secretariat. As part of the effort to increase the efficiency of the sector working groups, a series of evaluative workshops took place in 1997 and 1998 with a view to creating a more focused coordination structure that would correspond better to the planning process evolving within the Palestinian Authority, which was closely involved with this exercise. The outcome of this process has been the establishment of four main sector working groups devoted to infrastructure, the productive sector, the social sector and institution-building, which correspond to the core sectors of the Palestinian Development Plan. There are currently 14 sub-groups subsumed under these four groups. The changes that brought the current structure into being were approved by the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee in February 1999.

8. In April 1995, the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee established the Joint Liaison Committee, which provides a forum in which economic policy and practical matters related to donor assistance are discussed with the Palestinian Authority. The Joint Liaison Committee comprises the Palestinian Authority as gavel-holder; Norway, in its capacity as Chair of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, as Shepherd; the United Nations and the World Bank as joint Secretariat; the United States of America and the European Union. Japan was also invited to take part in the meetings. The Joint Liaison Committee discusses bilateral issues relating to donor assistance with the participation of representatives of the Government of Israel, who are invited to attend all meetings. The Joint Liaison Committee first met on 15 May 1995 and meets approximately five times per year.

9. As part of his efforts to improve United Nations coordination and to facilitate the process of creating complementarity between United Nations activities and the needs and priorities identified by the Palestinian Authority, the Special Coordinator convened the fifth United Nations inter-agency meeting in Gaza, on 7 and 8 October 1998. Representatives of approximately 20 agencies met with their counterparts in the Palestinian Authority and assessed the role and contribution of United Nations agencies to the Palestinian development effort and, in particular, the future direction of this cooperation in the context of the Palestinian Development Plan. During the discussions, the positive features and the challenges encountered were analysed, and issues of relevance to future cooperation were identified. As in previous years, the meeting provided a forum for finalizing the document entitled "The United Nations and the Palestinian Development Plan", which surveys some salient features of this relationship.

10. The Special Coordinator also led the United Nations delegation, comprising representatives of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), The International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), to the sixth meeting of the Consultative Group for the West Bank and Gaza, convened by the World Bank in Paris on 4 and 5 February 1999. The Consultative Group meeting was also the occasion for the Palestinian Authority to present its second rolling plan, extended to cover a five-year period, the Palestinian Development Plan, 1999–2003, to the international donor community. The Palestinian Development Plan represents the Palestinian Authority's commitment to developing national capacity in medium-term development planning and in the

implementation of development projects. The Palestinian Development Plan presented included over 170 projects with which the United Nations is associated that have a total value of about \$286 million. Both in numerical and value terms, this was an enhancement over the previous Palestinian Development Plan, underscoring the deepening commitment of the United Nations system to the socio-economic development of the occupied Palestinian territory.

#### **IV. Living conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory**

11. The Palestinian Ministry of Finance and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have estimated real gross domestic product (GDP) and gross national product (GNP) growth rates of 3.0 and 5.5 per cent respectively for 1998. Such growth would be sufficient for a marginal rise in annual per capita income levels in the occupied Palestinian territory for the first time since the beginning of the interim period in 1994. Improved macroeconomic conditions in 1998 were due to fewer comprehensive closures imposed on the occupied Palestinian territory. Such closures affected 5.2 per cent of working days in 1998, compared with 20.5 per cent of such days in 1997. This resulted in a 16.9 per cent increase in the number of Palestinian workers employed in Israel in 1998 and generally improved trade flows, as the nominal value of registered trade between Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory rose by 9.3 per cent.

12. There was moderate growth in private investment. Construction licensing activity grew by 4.6 per cent in 1998, a slower pace than in 1997, when licensing grew by over 13 per cent. Overall, new company registrations climbed by 12.6 per cent, with declines in the West Bank offset by increases in Gaza.

13. The value of approved investment projects under the Law for the Encouragement of Investment declined by 18.1 per cent to \$161 million in 1998, with declines in the West Bank offset by gains in Gaza. In nominal terms, bank credit extended to private business grew by 9.3 per cent to \$467.3 million. This represents a sharp deceleration in the growth of bank credit, which had risen by more than 40 per cent in 1997. While there was modest progress in 1998, private investment remains constrained by the general system of closures imposed on the occupied Palestinian territory.

14. While donor disbursements declined by 27.4 per cent in 1998 to a reported level of \$399.8 million, total public investment spending rose by an estimated 11 per cent to \$215 million. Public investment absorbed a higher share of total

disbursements in 1998, in part because the Palestinian Authority achieved a balanced recurrent budget for the first time.

15. Despite a small decline in the labour force participation rate, the labour force increased by an estimated 5.9 per cent to about 585,000 persons in 1998 and the number of fully employed persons increased by 18.9 per cent to 456,240. The standard unemployment rate fell from 20.9 per cent in 1997 to 15.6 per cent in 1998, the lowest rate recorded since 1995. In absolute terms, the number of unemployed persons decreased by about 21.5 per cent to about 91,000 persons. Average core unemployment rates in 1998 were 12.3 per cent in the West Bank and 23.5 per cent in the Gaza Strip. Broader measures of unemployment, which include discouraged workers, averaged 25.1 per cent in 1998, compared with 30.3 per cent in 1997. The broader unemployment rates in 1998 were 23.2 and 31.4 per cent in the West Bank and Gaza Strip respectively.

16. There were an estimated 58,450 new jobs for Palestinian workers in 1998, a 13.4 per cent increase over 1997, with employment growth in every economic branch. Of these, 56 per cent were located in Israeli-controlled areas and 44 per cent of total employment growth located in the occupied Palestinian territory. The private sector accounted for 64 per cent of the total number of new jobs in 1998 located in the occupied Palestinian territory, as compared with 51.2 per cent in 1997.

17. Despite generally rising employment opportunities, women's labour force participation fell to 11.7 per cent of working-age women, as compared with 12.3 per cent in 1997. While their participation rate declined, working women experienced higher full-employment and lower underemployment rates in 1998, suggesting a tendency for women to leave the formal labour market if full-time work is unavailable. This may be due to both structural and cultural constraints on women's employment. Reflecting the general trend, the women's unemployment rate declined to 16.9 per cent in 1998, while remaining above that for men, which fell to 15.5 per cent. This reversed the trend witnessed in 1996, when numerous and severe border closures drove men's unemployment rates to historically high levels.

18. In 1998, the average employed Palestinian worked 1.3 per cent more days per month relative to 1997. More job opportunities and fewer closure days led to an increase in real daily and monthly wages. The average real daily wage rate for a fully employed worker increased by about 8.5 per cent to 59.5 new shekels (NIS) (approximately \$15.6), while the monthly wage increased by about 10.1 per cent to NIS 1,347 (approximately \$353.5).

19. Despite the relative economic recovery, there was a persistent decline in average real household expenditures. Expenditures for the average Palestinian household fell from a monthly average of NIS 2,634 in 1997 to NIS 2,579 in 1998 (approximately \$677) — a decline of 2.1 per cent in inflation-adjusted terms. Evidence suggests that the decline in household expenditures may be due to the repayment of loans (which are excluded from the expenditure surveys) and greater savings. This indicates that households were paying back accumulated debt and curtailing expenditures, perhaps as a result of uncertainty about the future.

20. Consumer prices in 1998, after several years of deceleration, reversed course in 1998. Under the impact of the sharp depreciation of the new shekel/United States dollar exchange rate in autumn 1998, the rate of inflation in the consumer price index (CPI) in the occupied Palestinian territory rose to 9.7 per cent for the year, as compared with 6.1 per cent in 1997. Food prices increased by about five percentage points faster than the general price level, placing an added burden on household budgets. Food purchases accounted for 40.1 per cent of total expenditures in 1998 as compared with 38.7 per cent in 1997.

## **V. Assistance to the Palestinian people: ongoing programmes, unmet needs and proposals for additional assistance**

21. After consultations with the programmes and agencies of the United Nations system active in the area (a list of which appears in the annex to the present report), the Special Coordinator prepared the following update on assistance received by the Palestinian people in the occupied territories from United Nations agencies and programmes during the reporting period from June 1997 to May 1998, together with an analysis of needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them.

### **Department of Economic and Social Affairs**

22. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs has been involved in the provision of assistance to the occupied Palestinian territory since 1995, when five project documents were formulated in the area of public finance and business development. One of the projects, on strengthening audit



capabilities, has been carried out, while the remaining ones await funding.

### **Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia**

23. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) has focused its activities on supporting and monitoring the economic and social sectors in the occupied Palestinian territory. ESCWA provides the Economic and Social Council with an annual report on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan. This report covers a variety of issues affecting living conditions, such as the frequency of border closures, increases in housing projects in Israeli settlements, road construction, industrial expansion and the distribution of water resources among the Israeli and Palestinian populations.

24. In the area of housing and urban development, ESCWA participated in a review of urban upgrading activities undertaken by the Welfare Association in January 1999. Proposals focused on economic revitalization programmes, including prospects for youth employment and entrepreneurship. In the area of institution- and capacity-building, ESCWA is implementing a project on development of gender national statistics programmes in the Arab countries, in which the occupied Palestinian territory is one of nine participants. The project will include the establishment of a comprehensive gender statistics database at the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and a gender unit. ESCWA is also providing the Ministry of Social Affairs with assistance in reviewing progress towards the implementation of recommendations from the Fourth World Conference on Women. Moreover, ESCWA has been monitoring developments in the agricultural sector through two recent studies, "Evaluation of agricultural policies in the Palestinian territories" and a proposal for a general "Framework for an agriculture development policy in the Palestinian territories", to address the rehabilitation of agricultural cooperatives and the design of a development strategy in the agriculture sector.

### **International Atomic Energy Agency**

25. At its thirty-eighth General Conference, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) decided to identify potential technical assistance projects that could be

implemented in the occupied Palestinian territory through appropriate international organizations. Pursuant to this decision, the IAEA Board of Governors approved two projects which are being implemented through the International Centre for Theoretical Physics, in Trieste, Italy. In addition, the Agency has received two project proposals for support during the 1999–2000 technical cooperation programme. The "Radiation protection infrastructure" project aims to provide support for the formulation of a policy and legal framework and the establishment of a radiation protection and safety infrastructure under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian Authority. The project on the "Area-wide application of the sterile insect technique for medfly control" was formulated at the request of the Ministry of Agriculture. Medfly control is a region-wide problem and the new project will be carried out in conjunction with two ongoing projects under way in Jordan and Israel. To establish a coordination mechanism, representatives from Israel, Jordan and the Palestinian Authority met at IAEA headquarters in Vienna in October 1998, resulting in a joint communiqué in which the parties expressed their intention to cooperate in the implementation of Agency-supported activities related to the sterile insect technique in the region. In addition, a third proposal on human resources development was initiated as an extension of current activities. IAEA also provided various Palestinian professionals with training, fellowships and financial assistance to attend international meetings and efforts are under way to identify further projects in the occupied Palestinian territory.

### **International Civil Aviation Organization**

26. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has initiated several missions to Gaza and has formulated three project proposals for technical assistance to the Palestinian Civil Aviation Authority, which are still awaiting funding.

### **International Fund for Agricultural Development**

27. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) is currently supporting 16 micro-projects in the occupied Palestinian territory under its Relief and Development Programme. The aim of the Relief and Development Programme is to promote and support small-scale farmers and fishermen through credit; to establish centres to support micro-enterprises for women and the landless; to rehabilitate small-scale irrigation schemes and

equipment; to provide extension services to promote the cultivation of new high market-value crops; and to extend loans to fishermen. Until 1998, the Palestinian Authority was not eligible for loans under the Fund's lending criteria but IFAD contributed to the Relief and Development Programme through the Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction and other partners, under a provision that enables IFAD to allocate grants to research institutions and non-governmental organizations. As of August 1998, loans in excess of \$3.5 million have benefited numerous farming, fishing and women's enterprises; a women's business service centre was established in the Gaza Strip to encourage and train women entrepreneurs; the 50-year old Ein El Sultan open-canal irrigation system was upgraded and a water users' association was set up to assume responsibility for the scheme; and extension services have led to the diversification of the crop mix. At its twenty-first session, in February 1998, the Governing Council of IFAD adopted a resolution by which loans are now being extended to the Palestinian Authority. The Participatory Natural Resource Management Programme, approved by the Executive Board of IFAD in April 1998, will benefit some 3,600 smallholder families in the West Bank over five years to plan and implement natural resource development schemes for land and water, and provide the rural credit required for income-generating enterprises. IFAD will also ensure that women-headed households are targeted by the programme as a matter of first priority.

### **International Labour Organization**

28. Since 1994, the International Labour Organization (ILO) has been developing a technical assistance programme for the occupied Palestinian territory, its largest programme in the Arab region. During the period under review, ILO implemented the following projects: the establishment of a vocational rehabilitation centre; a programme for the rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-detainees; the training of contractors; an integrated small enterprise promotion at the Palestinian Chamber of Commerce; the Palestinian Employment Programme; and the establishment of a model production workshop to manufacture wheelchairs. With its own financial resources, ILO also carried out a programme to strengthen the Ministry of Labour and fielded a project formulation mission on employment generation in the tourism sector and technical advisory missions on the labour code. These programmes covered employment promotion, small enterprise development, vocational rehabilitation, labour administration, social security and women workers. ILO assistance contributed to improvements in expertise and skills through staff training, institution-building through the

provision of equipment and to the establishment of appropriate strategies and action programmes. Assistance in the above areas needs to be further enhanced, and activities need to be launched in the fields of occupational safety and health, vocational training and social security. ILO has formulated a number of project proposals for the second phase of ongoing projects in addition to new projects in the fields of occupational safety and health, hotel and tourism, social security and women. In addition, a mission will be fielded shortly to assess the achievements of the ILO technical cooperation programme to date, and to identify needs for future assistance.

### **International Maritime Organization**

29. An International Maritime Organization (IMO) needs assessment mission visited Gaza in December 1997 to identify specific areas in which the Palestinian Authority could benefit from IMO technical assistance. Two projects were formulated for the establishment of maritime administration and the development of human resources for this sector. IMO has begun to implement those components of the projects which it can finance from its own budget and is seeking donors to finance the balance.

### **International Trade Centre**

30. In May 1996, the International Trade Centre (ITC) began implementing a technical cooperation project for the export of high-value, fresh-cut flowers from the occupied Palestinian territory. ITC has assisted Palestinian growers and exporters in on-farm production and cold-storage techniques; post-harvest handling and quality control; export market development and marketing; trade information services; and the production of the first catalogue of Palestinian fresh-cut flowers. An evaluation in 1998 concluded that the project had achieved significant commercial and political success, endorsed by international acceptance of Palestinian export documentation. In addition, the principle of direct marketing by Palestinian growers, a prime object of the project, was achieved, the situation of Palestinian exporters was strengthened with regard to Israeli agricultural export and marketing organizations and problems related to delays, inspections and damage to products and packaging at border posts were reduced significantly.

31. In late 1998, ITC also invited the Palestinian Trade Centre to prepare a supply survey on processed foods and agricultural products in the occupied Palestinian territory, for

the Pan-Arab Buyers-Sellers Meeting in Abu Dhabi in February 1999, at which Palestinian companies concluded a number of agreements with their Arab counterparts. The Palestinian Trade Centre was invited in early 1999 to prepare a demand survey on metal and related products for a similar meeting in Cairo in May 1999. Based on the two surveys and on the previous work of ITC, various priority areas for technical cooperation have been identified and, as a follow-up, ITC has been invited by the Ministry of Economy and Trade to assess the needs and potential of the Palestinian business community, to be followed by the formulation of a technical cooperation project.

### **International Telecommunication Union**

32. During the reporting period, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) conducted a number of missions in the occupied Palestinian territory, for the implementation of assistance in telecommunications development. A senior expert in telecommunications was seconded to the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications and a mission provided advice on setting up a mission control department in the Ministry. In addition, fellowships were granted to Palestinian professionals to participate in training courses, regional workshops and ITU international activities, and assistance was also extended to the Palestinian News Agency.

### **United Nations Centre for Human Settlements**

33. The United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) has recently prepared two proposals, "Preparatory assistance project for environmental planning and management support to Gaza city" and "Low-cost housing specifications and guidelines" which await funding. In addition, Habitat, in conjunction with Bir Zeit University, has carried out a case study focusing on the issue of gender in urban management and development. A meeting was held in Cairo in January 1999 to compare the lessons learned from the Palestinian and Egyptian case studies and to devise a strategy for gender mainstreaming in the region. In addition, Habitat's Housing and Urban Development Corporation will organize a consultation on poverty reduction in cooperation with the Palestinian Authority towards the end of 1999.

### **Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights**

34. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR), through its office in Gaza, concentrates on three interrelated components: the establishment of a legal framework; the development of an official policy on human rights; and the strengthening of national institutions.

35. To help establish a legal framework, UNHCHR has provided the Ministry of Justice, the Palestinian Legislative Council and the Palestinian Bar Association, with advisory services as well as training for Bar members on human rights and organizational development. UNHCHR has also provided technical and financial assistance to women's rights organizations, the Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizens' Rights, Bir Zeit University Institute of Law and the Palestinian Association for Legal Sciences to conduct legal research and workshops. UNHCHR technical advice and grants have been directed to building capacity for legal research and drafting skills, and UNHCHR will continue to assist the Palestinian Authority in the unification of West Bank and Gaza laws, focusing on the human rights dimension of legislation. To assist in the development of an official policy on human rights, UNHCHR has held consultations with the Palestinian Authority and non-governmental organizations on the forthcoming Palestinian national plan of action for human rights and has developed a working paper on the appropriate methodologies, working groups and terms of reference for consultants.

36. Institutional strengthening is the largest component of UNHCHR's programme with the Palestinian Authority, and UNHCHR has provided courses, documentation and materials for Palestinian Police Force commanders, officers and trainers as well as for non-governmental organizations. Within the Palestinian Police Force, UNHCHR has established a cadre of qualified human rights and law enforcement peer trainers and intends to work further with such trainers, through advanced training fellowships and technical assistance, to develop an institutionalized code of conduct and standing orders consistent with international human rights standards.

### **United Nations Conference on Trade and Development**

37. Following the endorsement of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) "Programme of technical cooperation activities in support of Palestinian Trade, finance and related services", the

Palestinian Authority requested UNCTAD to extend technical assistance in specific priority areas. UNCTAD has since fielded some 20 advisory missions and prepared summary project proposals, all of which have been endorsed by the relevant ministries. There has been increasing emphasis on operational activities to provide concrete assistance with a view to strengthening the Palestinian private sector. Recent activities have included a feasibility study for an industrial estate in Nablus; promoting cooperation between the Palestinian Authority and Jordan; training programmes in international commercial diplomacy; strengthening trade efficiency; and guidelines for human resource development in trade (TRAINFORTRADE) and for sustained development of the Palestinian economy. UNCTAD has also completed two studies on issues that confront the Palestinian economy entitled "Palestinian merchandise trade in the 1990: opportunities and challenges" and "The Palestinian economy and prospects for regional cooperation".

38. Specific needs have been identified in a range of areas, which UNCTAD has already begun, to or intends to address, and a number of specific project proposals have been prepared. These include: regional and multilateral trade policy; trade-related services and facilitation; international commodity trading; customs administration and trade-related data; multi-modal transport and port operations; public debt management; domestic insurance sector reform; investment promotion framework; and enterprise and technology development. Further consolidation of UNCTAD's capacities will be sought in cooperation with other agencies, to enhance synergies, avoid duplication and coordinate related activities, and to assist in integrating the occupied Palestinian territory into the regional and global economy.

### **United Nations International Drug Control Programme**

39. The United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) focuses on a multisectoral approach to coordinating and integrating drug control policies into the broader developmental policies of the occupied Palestinian territory. To enhance the drug enforcement and interdiction capacity of existing Palestinian drug law enforcement agencies, UNDCP has supplied the Palestinian Anti-Narcotics Administration with a computer network, a forensic laboratory and training for personnel in anti-narcotics operations. This has resulted in an improvement in performance and increased cooperation between the Palestinian and Egyptian anti-narcotics administrations. UNDCP, in cooperation with the UNSCO Legal Adviser, has

also assisted the Palestinian Authority to establish a legal and institutional framework for drug control and to consider modalities for implementing the provisions of the United Nations drug control Conventions. UNDCP is also assisting with capacity-building for personnel from the Ministries of Health and Social Affairs to provide counselling, treatment and rehabilitation services. An international demand reduction consultant conducted an assessment for such services in December 1998, and training workshops were scheduled for health and social workers in Gaza in May 1999. To provide additional technical resources to the ANA and improve cross border cooperation with neighbouring countries, a UNDCP subregional technical cooperation programme has been proposed and the first technical meeting between Jordan, Egypt, Israel and the Palestinian Authority was held in Amman, in February 1999. In addition, to assist the Ministry of Health in ensuring more effective control over the distribution of licit drugs, UNDCP will assess the inspection capabilities and training needs of the Ministry to develop an effective inspection and control system.

### **United Nations Development Programme**

40. During the reporting period, the UNDP Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (UNDP/PAPP) expanded its support in the area of infrastructure. In 1998, UNDP project expenditures exceeded \$37 million. Youth centres and women's activity centres in the West Bank are being rehabilitated and a cultural centre constructed, projects which utilize labour-intensive methods to help alleviate unemployment. Other ongoing infrastructure projects include the rehabilitation and construction of schools, a hospital, water systems and roads. UNDP received an emergency contribution from the Government of Japan to support projects intended to facilitate the implementation of the Wye River Memorandum. The projects will rehabilitate and construct crossing facilities to support the movement of persons and commercial goods in and out of the Gaza Strip. Technical assistance, training and infrastructure support is also being provided to enhance the operation of the Gaza International Airport and to develop the capacity of Palestinian Authority ministries operating at border crossings. Responding to the urgent need of Palestinian Authority institutions to formulate plans and policies aimed at alleviating poverty, UNDP, through its Sustainable Human Development Unit, supported the preparation of the first Palestinian poverty report. As a follow-up to the Poverty Report, a Palestinian poverty eradication plan will be developed and submitted to the Palestinian Legislative Council and to the Cabinet.

41. In the area of gender, UNDP, working in close cooperation with the Inter-ministerial Committee for the Advancement of Women, initiated a pilot project to develop a Rural Girls Development Centre. The Centre provides training in marketable skills and helps to develop awareness of social, political, legal and economic issues that influence women's lives. The Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture have created a special curriculum and have provided the required training to enable the young women to become community health workers or agricultural extension workers. UNDP has also initiated a project to establish women's units within ministries to advocate gender equality and is supporting the establishment of a Gender Statistics Unit at the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. The Sustainable Human Development Unit has also developed a project to assist educational organizations to elaborate gender-sensitive curricula addressing the special needs of both girls and boys.

42. Through its Public Administration Support Programme, UNDP has continued support for training to build the auditing capacity of the General Control Institute and the Ministry of Finance; to enhance coordination among ministries through support to the Cabinet Office; to provide training and technical assistance in the area of public sector management; and to support training and technical assistance in line ministries. In the area of governance, UNDP also provided support to the Palestinian Legislative Council to encourage the development of democratic, transparent and accountable practices.

43. Through its "Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals" (TOKTEN) programme, UNDP has recruited over 150 highly skilled expatriate Palestinian professionals to serve as short-term advisers. Through the use of core resources and the TOKTEN modality, UNDP has continued to provide the Palestinian Authority with critical support in its efforts to produce the Palestinian Development Plan 1999–2003, focusing during the reporting year on expanding the participatory nature of the PDP preparation process to include government officials, the public and marginalized groups. UNDP is also continuing its United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme. A new UNV project with a strong gender focus, "Empowering young women in underprivileged Palestinian areas", seeks to foster the social development of school girls from rural and underprivileged areas of the West Bank and builds upon the national UNV scheme that was launched in 1996. UNDP is also placing UNVs in universities, municipalities, non-governmental organizations, the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities and the National Conservatory of Music. The UNV White Helmets Initiative is involved in producing detailed urban

plans for the municipalities of Gaza, Khan Younis and Rafah and the project has also been extended to Bethlehem. White Helmet specialists are also cooperating with the Palestinian Red Crescent Society to train a disaster preparedness team and prepare the way towards a national disaster plan.

44. UNDP is also continuing its active support for rural and economic development, environmental protection and agricultural production. The reclamation of degraded rangelands has resulted in the rehabilitation of agricultural land, and generated work for thousands of unemployed Palestinians. UNDP is working with the Ministry of Agriculture to develop its capacity in policy analysis and planning, and to develop agricultural research and extension services. UNDP has also expanded the Local Rural Development Programme to improve the living standard of people in rural areas, and to promote local economic development and employment generation. The programme also aims to strengthen the capacity of local authorities and to develop the ability of the Ministry of Local Government to provide villages and micro-regions with technical assistance. The restoration of archaeological and historic sites in the Bethlehem area forms part of a broader UNDP effort to support tourism development for "Bethlehem 2000". In cooperation with the Global Environment Facility, UNDP is implementing projects that will promote energy efficiency and develop a biodiversity strategy and action plan.

45. The UNDP programme of activities responds directly to the development priorities identified in the Palestinian Development Plan, as well as civil society institutions, and all projects are undertaken in close cooperation with the relevant ministries. The overall strategy is based on using limited UNDP core resources to launch capacity-building programmes that are subsequently sustained through bilateral donor support, and ensuring the sustainability of capacity-building programmes by matching UNDP technical and managerial expertise with the accountability and viability of local implementation partners. UNDP also works closely with the Office of the Special Coordinator and with other United Nations organizations, and plays an active role in the donor coordination mechanisms, providing administrative and logistical support to 14 United Nations agencies working in the occupied Palestinian territory.

### **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization**

46. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has been undertaking a programme of cooperation with the Palestinian people since 1974. In

April 1994, a plan of action was prepared by the joint UNESCO/Palestinian Coordination Committee, which was translated into the Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (PAPP), containing 27 projects. The second phase of PAPP, entitled "Development for peace" and composed of 12 new projects, was agreed upon in May 1997 and a UNESCO liaison office was opened in the West Bank the same month.

47. A Special Donors' Conference for Bethlehem 2000 was held in Brussels in May 1998. Of the \$25 million committed by the World Bank to Bethlehem 2000, \$1.2 million will go towards three UNESCO projects: a feasibility study on the different options for preserving Palestinian cultural heritage; a culture and heritage legislation project; and the preparation of an action plan for Hebron and Jericho. The World Bank has also agreed to finance a cultural film on Bethlehem to be produced under the auspices of UNESCO, and the Bethlehem 2000 roving exhibition continued its tour of European cities. In addition, an agreement was signed between Verona, Italy and Bethlehem to develop friendly relations and cultural exchanges, and experts from Verona are preparing a project document for the creation of a Museum of the Nativity in Bethlehem. Italy is also funding two conservation projects in Hisham's Palace in Jericho and Norwegian funding is being used to train Palestinian specialists in the conservation and restoration of cultural heritage.

48. Within the framework of continuing technical support to the capacity-building of the Ministries of Education and Higher Education, UNESCO supported the establishment of a Directorate of Scientific Research; a conference on information technology in higher education; an expert in the area of special educational needs; a report on "Education for All 2000" and a students' guide to Palestinian higher educational institutions. Through its regular programme, UNESCO has also continued financial and technical support to the UNRWA Department of Education and has supported activities in early childhood learning, distance education and the development of the history curriculum in Jerusalem schools in addition to sponsoring Palestinian participants at various international conferences and workshops. Within the framework of the project entitled "Reaching the unreached/education for children in need", cooperation continued with Gazan non-governmental organizations. Projects for the rehabilitation and provision of furniture and teaching materials for 17 schools in the West Bank commenced in March 1999, financed by the Government of Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia has also agreed to fund, through UNESCO, a hotel management school at the University of Al Azhar in Gaza and an institute for archaeological and architectural conservation at Al-Quds University, East

Jerusalem. UNESCO will also donate 120,000 books to the eight Palestinian universities and various municipalities, as well as French textbooks to schools.

49. UNESCO also continued support to its multipurpose community resource centres in Gaza and Nablus, which have initiated vocational training courses in languages, tourism, computer science and civic awareness campaigns. A three-year project on capacity-building in water resources was launched in March 1998 at the Water Research Centre of Al Azhar University and two experts visited Nablus to provide advice on technology transfer for urban drainage. As part of UNESCO support to the Palestinian News Agency project, a UNESCO mission identified the equipment and training needs of the Agency and technical assistance is also being extended to the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation and to the Ministry of Culture. Finally, through the network of the UNITWIN project for twinning universities, UNESCO has supported publication of the "Journal of Involuntary Migration" and the convening of a conference on the subject in Jerusalem in December 1998.

### **United Nations Population Fund**

50. Since 1998, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) support, which totalled \$7.2 million for the period 1996-1999, has been provided through the Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People. Programme activities fall within the three core areas of UNFPA assistance, namely reproductive health, including family planning and sexual health; population and development strategies; and advocacy. The programme is being implemented by relevant Palestinian Authority institutions and local non-governmental organizations. Through the programme, UNFPA has aimed at capacity-building in Palestinian institutions and provision of technical assistance and transfer of know-how through the advisers of the UNFPA Country Support Team in Amman; concentrating assistance on poor, densely populated and under-served areas; promoting partnership between Palestinian Authority and local non-governmental organizations; and ensuring complementarity with activities supported by other United Nations agencies and relevant donors.

51. The Reproductive Health Programme assists the Palestinian Authority in achieving the goals of its Health Plan by helping to build local institutional capabilities for the provision of such care. At the policy level, UNFPA assisted in the development of the infrastructure and human resources as well as technical capabilities of the Women's Health and Development Department of the Ministry of Health. At the

service delivery level, UNFPA assisted in the establishment of a women's centre for reproductive health care, social assistance, legal and psychological counselling and community education at Burej refugee camp, Gaza, which served some 13,000 refugee women in 1998 and is supporting the establishment of a similar centre in the Jabalia refugee camp, Gaza. In the West Bank town of Jenin, UNFPA supports community-based outreach activities for reproductive health services and information, education and communication for both men and women. The project recruited about 6,000 new users of contraceptives, introduced reproductive health/family planning services in 20 clinics and laid the ground for the integration of quality reproductive health/family planning services in 58 primary health care clinics. A reproductive health strategy and master plan is being prepared to help the Ministry of Health coordinate donor inputs.

52. UNFPA contributes to the development of indicators to measure progress achieved in implementation of the relevant programmes of action of global conferences. UNFPA has also assisted the Palestinian Authority in the development of a project on analysis and dissemination of the data and on training for its effective utilization. In addition, with assistance from UNFPA, an advocacy task force was established and an advocacy strategy is being developed to create a positive environment for population and reproductive health programmes and to raise awareness of gender issues among policy makers, planners and media professionals. UNFPA helped to develop a source book on population and reproductive health for adult education, train 100 educators on effective communication of reproductive health concepts to students and train 100 youth educators to be peer counsellors.

53. As regards future assistance, a mid-term review of the Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People in early 1999 concluded that its objectives, strategies and activities were still valid, realistic and achievable in the context of the Palestinian Health Plan (1995–1999) and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, and it has contributed to enhancing the capabilities of the Palestinian Authority and non-governmental organizations. It recommended that female gynaecologists and midwives be trained to improve access to reproductive health services; access be improved to adolescent reproductive health services; there should be further strengthening of local institutions in the planning, management and coordination of reproductive health; mechanisms should be developed for the long-term sustainability and cost recovery of reproductive health services; and the development of a master plan should be

expedited for the coordination of reproductive health inputs from donors. The mid-term review also recommended the extension of the programme for one year, with an additional allocation of almost \$1 million to respond to the needs cited above. In addition, it is proposed that a women's centre similar to those in Burej and Jabalia be established in Jericho.

## United Nations Children's Fund

54. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) — Palestinian Authority Master Plan of Operations for Palestinian Children and Women 1998–2000 is made up of three integrated programmes: health and nutrition; basic education; and advocacy and capacity-building. The Plan aims to promote the needs of Palestinian children and women, as outlined in the guiding instruments: the Declaration and Plan of Action of the World Summit for Children, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women. During 1998, UNICEF contributed \$1.8 million to the above programmes, through the provision of technical assistance, and supplies for capacity-building of Palestinian governmental and non-governmental institutions, and advocacy and social mobilization activities.

55. In its health and nutrition programme, UNICEF supported the training of trainers in various health disciplines; upgraded the training capacity and resource centres of local universities and training institutes; assisted in the standardization of procedures and protocols for the management of common diseases and disorders; arranged networking visits and participation in regional and global activities for Palestinian health professionals; increased the capability of health professionals on disease surveillance and control; enhanced community awareness through the production and dissemination of health education; supported the rights, needs and health of young persons and school children; and piloted a referral and health information system.

56. In the Basic Education Programme, training and study visits for relevant staff were conducted with various ministries and non-governmental organizations. Technical assistance was also provided for global education, developing better parenting messages and training on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In addition, a manual on better parenting was prepared for community education and was discussed at a symposium conducted by the Ministry of Social Affairs. A national campaign for community education was also conducted, in which issues such as gender, children in difficult circumstances, child labour and children with special needs were addressed. Another campaign, using theatre to

introduce the Convention on the Rights of the child, with special emphasis on gender equality and the integration of children with special needs, toured different primary schools. Finally, a magazine dealing with the needs and rights of children was produced by the Ministry of Social Affairs, with technical and financial assistance from UNICEF.

57. In the Advocacy and Capacity-building Programme, training activities were conducted for a large number of social workers and media professionals on children's issues, using a rights-based approach to programming. Field study visits, research and evaluation activities were also conducted. National policies on foster parents are being devised, and a round table discussion on child labour was carried out using the UNICEF child labour report. Advocacy activities with policy makers, professionals and media persons were also carried out, aiming at increasing the awareness and ensuring their continued commitment towards achieving the rights of Palestinian children and women. In addition, community awareness campaigns aimed at increasing awareness at all levels of society, with special emphasis on children, were carried out.

58. Several key needs remain to be addressed, especially those related to children with special needs. The high population growth rate demonstrates the importance of focusing on the rights and the needs of youth and adolescents, especially their right to participate in the development process. Awareness of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women is low, overall social development planning and rights-based programming is inadequate and more attention should be directed to community empowerment. The quality and relevance of formal and non-formal education requires continued UNICEF support, as do major women's health issues such as breast-feeding promotion, early marriages and the high birth rate. These needs form key areas of attention in the UNICEF 1999 plan of action, developed within the framework of the three-year Master Plan of Operations.

### **United Nations Development Fund for Women**

59. The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) continues to provide technical and financial support towards strengthening women's economic capacity as entrepreneurs and producers; engendering governance and leadership that increase women's participation in the decision-making process; promoting women's human rights to eliminate all forms of violence against women; and

transforming development into a more peaceful, equitable and sustainable process. The UNIFEM economic empowerment programme aims to strengthen women's economic capacity, especially in the context of the new trade agenda and the emergence of new technologies. The project entitled Development of women's entrepreneurship and leadership in Gaza, in partnership with the Ministry of Social Affairs and local non-governmental organizations, has been supporting the establishment of three social development centres. In addition, workshops and training were organized on the various aspects of starting and running a business for women, and gender planning and analysis courses were conducted for the directors of social centres and the heads of departments.

60. As part of the UNIFEM governance programme, the Women in development facilitation initiative project in Western Asia was set up. This project analyses women in development and gender and development trends across development sectors. The women in development/gender and development projects of some 22 local non-governmental organizations have been surveyed in developing a regional database software and the fourth edition of the "Beyond Beijing" newsletter was produced, focusing on the Gaza Strip and the issue of women's health. The women in development facilitation initiative continues to serve as the secretariat of the local gender task force, which brings together all the United Nations agencies in the occupied Palestinian territory involved in women's programmes. UNIFEM also subcontracted the Bir Zeit Women's Studies Centre to assist the Palestinian Legislative Council in setting up a specialized resource centre on gender issues and women and laws.

61. As part of the Human Rights Programme, a regional campaign to eliminate violence against women aims to raise public awareness of the problem. A play addressing the issue of domestic violence in the Palestinian context was performed, and the campaign also included radio, television and newspaper reports. UNIFEM also supported a newly established non-governmental organization active in legal advocacy for women's rights, and the Trust Fund project, "Legal victimization of women in the Arab world" proposes to conduct a study on the issue of honour killings.

### **United Nations Institute for Training and Research**

62. The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) conducted 14 workshops in 1998 for the Palestinian Authority, in the fields of financial management and auditing, management development and geographic information systems. In cooperation with UNDP, UNITAR



is continuing training programmes in financial management and auditing for mid-level and senior managers, and is also developing a programme in commercial diplomacy, in conjunction with UNDP and UNCTAD, for staff at all levels in the Ministry of Economy and Trade. Training of trainers workshops are also planned in order to make the Palestinian Authority self-sufficient in meeting its training needs.

### **United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East**

63. The total number of refugees in the occupied Palestinian territory served by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) numbered 1,348,438, of whom 578,744 live in 27 refugee camps. UNRWA operates or sponsors 389 facilities and employs 9,792 staff, over 99 per cent of whom are locally recruited Palestinians. The operational character of UNRWA activities differs from that of other United Nations organizations, which for the most part work through the Palestinian Authority or local executing agencies.

64. In the education sector, the 266 UNRWA elementary and preparatory schools accommodated 211,836 pupils in the 1998–1999 school year, an increase of 10,950 over the previous year. Despite progress in construction and upgrading, lack of funds and sites meant that many schools had to be accommodated in unsatisfactory rented premises, suffered from overcrowding, or were in need of maintenance. To accommodate additional refugee pupils, the Agency continued to rely on contract teachers. Owing to funding shortfalls, UNRWA remained unable to extend the basic education cycle in the West Bank from 9 to 10 years to maintain conformity with the Palestinian Authority education system. The Agency's four vocational and technical training centres provided 2,012 trainees with a variety of programmes. In addition to regular in-service staff training programmes, the Educational Sciences Faculty at the Ramallah training centres offered pre-service teacher training leading to a first university degree for 600 trainees and university scholarships were awarded to 346 Palestine refugee students. The UNRWA 1998 education budget in the occupied Palestinian territory was \$78.9 million, although estimated annual expenditure was only \$67.4 million, owing to austerity and other cost reduction measures.

65. In the health sector, UNRWA operated 51 health facilities that provided comprehensive primary health care and handled 3.5 million patient visits in 1998. Rehabilitation services were provided through 12 physiotherapy clinics. Secondary care was made available to refugee patients

through a combination of contractual agreements with non-governmental and private hospitals and partial reimbursement of treatment costs, and directly at the Agency's 43-bed hospital in Qalqilia in the West Bank. In addition to several projects to extend or improve internal sewerage in camps, environmental health services included sewage disposal, management of storm-water runoff, provision of safe drinking water, collection and disposal of refuse and control of insect and rodent infestation. Work continued on the 232-bed European Gaza Hospital which, upon completion, will be handed over to the Palestinian Authority. An affiliated Gaza College of Nursing was taken over by the Ministry of Health in August 1998 and will help to provide qualified staff for the hospital. In October 1997, the Palestinian Authority, the European Commission and UNRWA signed a memorandum of understanding establishing a hospital project board and agreeing that an international management team would carry out the pre-commissioning and commissioning of the hospital. The UNRWA 1998 health budget for the occupied Palestinian territory was \$27.4 million, although estimated annual expenditure was only \$22.1 million, owing to austerity and other cost reduction measures.

66. In the relief and social services sector, the UNRWA special hardship programme provided 96,522 eligible refugees with direct material and financial assistance, an increase of 2 per cent over the previous year. UNRWA sponsored 25 women's programmes, 17 community rehabilitation and 26 youth activity centres, plus a rehabilitation centre in Gaza for the visually impaired. The UNRWA 1998 relief and social services budget in the occupied Palestinian territory was \$13.5 million, although estimated annual expenditure was only \$8.5 million, again owing to austerity and other cost reduction measures.

67. UNRWA continued implementation of its Peace Implementation Programme, which seeks to improve infrastructure, create employment and enhance socio-economic conditions for refugees in the Agency's five fields of operation, but there was a marked decline in pledges and contributions as compared with previous years. UNRWA also continued to operate an income-generation programme to create job opportunities and alleviate poverty by making credit available to small businesses and micro-enterprises through revolving loan funds established with project contributions. Established in 1991, the programme had, by 31 December 1998, provided a total of \$26.6 million in loans at commercial interest rates to 17,471 enterprises, while achieving repayment rates approaching 100 per cent.

68. The work of UNRWA continued to be affected by the continuing financial crisis that the Agency has faced since 1993 as a result of repeated shortfalls in funding for the

regular budget combined with increasing refugee needs. These shortfalls necessitated the introduction of a series of austerity measures to bring expenditure in line with income and to reduce deficit amounts. The Agency was consequently unable to expand services at a rate commensurate with the growth in the registered refugee population, and it experienced a deterioration in the quality of services as a result of overburdened staff and facilities. The Agency was obliged to maintain a series of austerity measures, originally introduced in 1993, which represented a direct reduction in services. These measures included a general recruitment freeze and a freeze in regular budget allocations for shelter rehabilitation, university scholarships and cash assistance to special hardship cases.

### **The Office of the Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories**

69. In addition to its support, outlined above, to the work of local and international mechanisms, UNSCO continued to coordinate bilateral and multilateral training programmes for the Palestinian Police Force. In 1998, 17 specialized training courses were held for some 300 policemen and officers. The main objectives were to initiate a maintenance and revival strategy to reverse a declining trend in training activities and police projects in general, and to continue support for a transformation of international training efforts into a long-term framework to enable the police to undertake its own training. The need for more specialized training for the Palestinian Police Force was projected to the donor community through the sector working group on police and through the UNSCO general support services to those involved in the police sector. Recently, donor contacts have produced promising initiatives and indicated commitments for police projects in 1999 and thereafter. UNSCO continues to serve as the secretariat for the sector working group on police and provides the Palestinian Police Force and donors with general support and advisory services, facilitates visiting missions and trainers and assists in the monitoring, follow-up and evaluation of courses and training programmes.

70. The Economic and Social Monitoring Unit continued to publish periodic reports on economic and social conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory, in addition to a special report entitled "The economy of the West Bank and Gaza Strip: a retrospective on the 1990s and future challenges". A project to gather data pertaining to private construction activity in the occupied Palestinian territory is nearing completion. The UNSCO Legal Adviser has prepared a new comprehensive assessment of the development of the rule of

law in the West Bank and Gaza Strip based on an extensive survey among the Palestinian officials and institutions concerned and international partners. The survey shows that support for this sector has grown and that more than 320 projects are ongoing in this area, with more than \$100 million committed. Particular emphasis was given to assisting with the updating of the Palestinian Authority's strategic plan for this domain and to ensuring its consistency with the Palestinian Development Plan. As part of its activities associated with the non-governmental organization sector, UNSCO has published a second, updated edition of its directory of non-governmental organizations in the Gaza Strip and a directory of non-governmental organizations in the West Bank is under print. There are plans to bring out a second revised edition of the directory of non-governmental organizations in donor countries.

### **World Food Programme**

71. The World Food Programme (WFP) provides the occupied Palestinian territory with assistance equivalent to \$17.3 million, in the form of short-term relief interventions and quick action projects. More recently, WFP has provided assistance to the poorest segment of the population as a contribution to the social safety net package of the Ministry of Social Affairs. The current project, initiated in May 1998, envisaged support for 67,000 of the poorest among the Palestinian population in the Gaza Strip and in the rural areas of the West Bank, but the number of beneficiaries had reached 120,000 by the end of 1998. This was due to continuing unemployment, as a result of economic depression and border closures, and the increasing number of people who are experiencing prolonged social hardship and seeking assistance from the Ministry. The Ministry has accordingly expanded beneficiary coverage to include new applicants, in addition to 6,300 beneficiaries targeted through non-governmental organizations for food for work and gender related activities.

72. WFP assistance is also directed to poor farmers and fishermen involved in small-scale pilot projects implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture, to vocational training centres and maternal and child health centres. In addition, 11 non-governmental organizations with short-term operating budgets have received WFP assistance, to enable them to hire and retain the necessary staff as well as volunteers, and to improve their community outreach services. WFP rations are also distributed through the Ministry of Agriculture to 720 small-scale and landless farmers in south Gaza against a token cash payment representing 30 per cent of the market value of

the food ration. The funds generated in the first year of the project will be used to support agricultural production and help farmers to adopt new farming patterns suitable for local market requirements. Similar activities are being planned to start in the Jericho area for 800 beneficiary farmers. In addition to in-kind assistance, the WFP direct cash contribution to the project has been used to support capacity-building in the Ministry of Social Affairs, and to upgrade and repair existing storage facilities in Gaza and Khan Younis. WFP food aid has proven an effective means of income transfer for the poorest of the population and has provided a form of food security, which assisted many families in overcoming temporary food supply problems. During the period from May 1998 to March 1999, WFP provided 10,670 metric tons of food commodities valued at \$4.75 million. In order to meet the requirements of an increased number of beneficiaries, WFP is considering a revision in its budget for the remaining period of the project.

### **World Health Organization**

73. To ensure effective coordination in the health sector, the World Health Organization (WHO) has continued carrying out its mandate by sharing health data and information with interested donors and organizations. Planning of activities has been carried out jointly with UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, the World Bank, the European Commission, and with several non-governmental organizations under the overall coordination of UNSCO.

74. A report on the development priorities of the occupied Palestinian territory, jointly prepared by the Ministry of Health, the World Bank and WHO, has been presented to the international and the Palestinian health communities. The document highlights the problems in developing an effective health system and suggests measures to improve efficiency and sustainability. Following the report, the Special Technical Assistance Programme has focused on the need to rehabilitate primary health care and to strengthen and improve primary health care services. An assessment of the general situation of the public primary health care network is being carried out by WHO with UNDP and World Bank support, and a proposal for a programme of rehabilitation and rationalization is being prepared. The goal is to guarantee sustainable primary health care services in suitable premises throughout the occupied Palestinian territory in an appropriate referral system. The Government of Japan has already made funds available for rehabilitating a large number of primary health care clinics in the West Bank.

75. A programme for the complete rehabilitation of the expanded programme of the immunization cold chain has been finalized. The programme, developed by WHO and executed jointly with UNICEF, has been part of the effort to improve and sustain cost-effective public health activities. In addition, two UNFPA projects aimed at the integration of reproductive health into primary health care services are currently being executed by the Special Technical Assistance Programme. These, *inter alia*, address practical aspects of the delivery of services by improving several key primary health care clinics where comprehensive reproductive health services are provided. The Palestinian Essential Drug Programme is aimed at improving the pharmaceutical sector. The essential drug list for primary health care is almost complete and the essential drug list for hospitals is under preparation. The primary health care list is already in use by the Ministry of Health as the basis for drug procurement. Health professionals have agreed on the need to use the list and to improve the rational use of drugs. The Ministry of Health and a large number of Palestinian health professionals also agree on the urgent need to develop and use standard Palestinian diagnostic treatment and referral protocols. The awareness raised by the programme has started bearing its first fruits: Ministry of Health expenditure on pharmaceuticals is declining.

76. The human component of the brucellosis control programme is entering its second year of implementation concurrently with the animal component executed by UNDP. Several donors contribute to the animal component, for which WHO provides backstopping and technical advice. Within this framework, training courses were held for key staff of the Ministry of Health and specialized training is taking place in Greece. New policies aimed at controlling the disease were adopted by the Ministry of Health, including compulsory notification of cases of the disease by private practitioners and private laboratories, with free treatment for all patients diagnosed with brucellosis. In addition, a project proposal, within the framework of the International Initiative for the Prevention of Disabilities (IMPACT), has been defined together with UNDP and UNICEF and has been submitted for funding to interested donors, and a teaching assistant has been assigned to Bir Zeit University for support in developing a new diploma course in primary health care. Upon a request from the Ministry of Health, support was provided to selected Palestinians to enhance knowledge in areas where local expertise is lacking, and publications have continued to be provided to the Ministry of Health, to non-governmental organizations and to relevant health institutions. Support has also been provided to United Nations agencies in the

procurement and delivery of equipment for health-related projects to the Palestinian Authority.

77. Despite a decrease in public investments by the donor community, the health sector allocation in the Palestinian budget was maintained at around \$100 million per year. However, a worrying aspect of the current economic situation which could negatively affect health sector development is that more than 50 per cent of the recurrent budget is spent on salaries and wages. To respond to these and other challenges, the joint WHO/World Bank/Ministry of Health study suggested that the health system should be financially sustainable, that efficiency should be improved through sector-wide initiatives and that the quality of services provided should improve. To achieve this, the donor community might support capacity-building in management, policy formulation and service delivery, which would result in the development of sustainable local institutions and provide financial assistance for those investments that are financially sustainable.

## **Annex**

### **United Nations entities active in the occupied territories**

Department of Economic and Social Affairs  
Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia  
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations  
International Atomic Energy Agency  
International Civil Aviation Organization  
International Fund for Agricultural Development  
International Labour Organization  
International Maritime Organization  
International Telecommunication Union  
International Trade Centre  
United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)  
United Nations Children's Fund  
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development  
United Nations Development Fund for Women  
United Nations Development Programme  
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization  
United Nations Environment Programme  
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights  
United Nations Industrial Development Organization  
United Nations Institute for Training and Research  
United Nations International Drug Control Programme  
United Nations Population Fund  
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East  
Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories  
United Nations Volunteers  
Universal Postal Union

World Food Programme  
World Health Organization

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Item 20 (c) of the provisional agenda\*

### Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: assistance to the Palestinian people

## Economic and Social Council Substantive session of 2000

New York, 5 July-1 August 2000

Agenda item 9\*\*

### Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations

## Assistance to the Palestinian people

### Report of the Secretary-General

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\* A/55/150.  
\*\* E/2000/100.

## **I. Introduction**

1. This report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 54/116 of 15 December 1999 on assistance to the Palestinian people, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to it at its fifty-fifth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the resolution. The present report covers the period from May 1999 to May 2000, and provides an analysis of the current status of development and of development assistance in the occupied Palestinian territory. It presents a more detailed account of the development process in the occupied Palestinian territory, including the United Nations role within it, than previous reports on the subject. It is hoped that the report will assist the international community in providing an effective response to the real needs of the people in the occupied Palestinian territory. This is particularly important given that potential political developments in the coming year will require extensive attention and support in order to foster progress and stability in the occupied Palestinian territory and in the region. A separate report, prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan (A/55/84), which has been submitted to the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council, provides detailed information on the living conditions of the Palestinian people.

2. In September 1999, the Secretary-General reconfigured the mandate of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories, whose title was changed to United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority. In addition to his responsibilities relating to the occupied Palestinian territory, the Special Coordinator now also has responsibilities for coordinating United Nations development assistance related to the peace process in Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic. A principal challenge for the United Nations system in this period is to underpin current peace talks and efforts to advance the political process, with programmes and projects that will lead to

long-term and sustainable development. The Special Coordinator is leading United Nations development efforts that are especially relevant to the peace process including anticipating and strengthening, as appropriate, the foundations for growth of development cooperation.

3. Throughout the period under review, the Special Coordinator has maintained his efforts to fulfil the mandate of his office, including ensuring better coordination between the relevant institutions of the Palestinian Authority and United Nations agencies, as well as the donor community, and monitoring and documenting economic and social conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory. He has also provided periodic analyses on these matters and special reports on specific issues relevant to the development effort, such as the constraints on and the prospects for growth of the private sector. The sixth annual United Nations inter-agency meeting, which was convened at the headquarters of the Special Coordinator on 14 to 15 June 2000, focused on further deepening cooperation and understanding between the resident and non-resident United Nations agencies and representatives of the Palestinian Authority. Particularly noteworthy were recommendations that sought to strengthen practical partnerships between the United Nations system, the Palestinian Authority and its ministries and international donors in the occupied Palestinian territory.

## **II. Development assistance**

4. As a result of the optimism generated by the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements (A/48/486-S/26560, annex) in 1993, the occupied Palestinian territory became one of the largest recipients of development assistance in the world in per capita terms. Donor disbursements averaged about US\$ 200 per person per year during the 1994-1998 period, excluding Palestinians in East Jerusalem. The United Nations presence in the occupied Palestinian territory increased from three organizations in 1993 to 13 in 1999. In addition, 12 organizations of the United Nations system are providing technical assistance and expertise to the Palestinian Authority.

5. According to figures provided by the Palestinian Authority's Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, the total amount of funds disbursed by a total of 48 donors over the 1993-1999 period was just over US\$ 2.75 billion. During the period 1994-1995, total donor commitments amounted to US\$ 1.41 billion and disbursements to US\$ 900.5 million. That trend continued through 1996, when commitments amounted to US\$ 789.9 and disbursements to US\$ 511.6 million. Over the three-year period from 1997 to 1999, however, a general trend of decline has been noted. Commitments have fallen yearly, declining from US\$ 789.9 million in 1996 to US\$ 546.8 million in 1999. Disbursements have fallen from US\$ 511.6 million in 1996 to US\$ 513 million in 1997, US\$ 409.2 in 1998 and US\$ 417.1 in 1999. The bulk of the disbursements, just under 90 per cent, has been in the form of grant aid, while the remainder was in loans. The World Bank is the largest of the eight loan creditors, and accounted for almost 30 per cent of all loan disbursements in 1999 and for just under 58 per cent over the 1993-1999 period.

6. In spite of the fact that the occupied Palestinian territory remains one of the largest recipients of international development assistance, it is nonetheless of concern that the past several years have seen a continuing decline in donor commitments and disbursements. No single factor can be identified as the principal cause of the overall decline, or for the significant decline in disbursements for public investment. Each donor's disbursements are influenced by numerous circumstances, many of which are unique to the particular donor.

7. The Tripartite Action Plan of 1999, a document drawn up in order to define understandings reached on the part of the international donor community, the Palestinian Authority and the Government of Israel, lists the following underlying reasons for this decline, as cited by donors, in order of importance: (a) the frequent shifts in the peace process and delays in the implementation of signed agreements over the years which have engendered an atmosphere of uncertainty; (b) the transition to an increasing number of economic development projects, which necessarily involves the preparation, appraisal and coordination of more complex projects with longer time horizons for implementation; (c) internal difficulties in donor countries that result in commitment and disbursement delays; (d) conflicts or natural disasters in other parts

of the world which make strong claims on limited donor resources; (e) difficulties of consensus building between donors and Palestinian stakeholders; (f) growing pains of the nascent Palestinian governance system; and (g) complex Israeli measures governing permits for roads, water projects, industrial estate development and physical planning.

### III. Palestinian Development Plan

8. The Palestinian Authority had presented the Palestinian Development Plan for the period 1998-2000, its first three-year rolling plan for capital investment, at the Consultative Group meeting in Paris on 14 and 15 December 1997. The Palestinian Development Plan laid out the goals, strategies, plans and policies for, and obstacles to the Palestinian development process. The document listed the programme areas and projects which the Palestinian Authority designated to be of the highest priority for socio-economic development. The total combined value of the over 600 projects listed in the Palestinian Development Plan, divided into four priority sectors, was approximately US\$ 3.5 billion, or approximately US\$ 1.2 billion a year.

9. The signing of the Wye River Memorandum on 23 October 1998 was followed by a ministerial meeting in Washington, D.C., on 30 November 1998, commemorating the five-year pledge made in 1993 by the international donor community to support the Palestinian people in their development efforts and needs. A new pledge for the following five years, of approximately US\$ 3.3 billion in grants to further support development efforts in the Palestinian territories, was also made at that meeting.

10. Although a three-year plan (1999-2001) was initially envisaged as a follow-up to the 1997 document, it was decided that a five-year plan needed to be considered and projections made for the support being pledged. The Palestinian Development Plan 1999-2003 is a comprehensive document, comprised of the following sections:

- Political, economic and social developments (1993-1998);
- Macroeconomic framework for medium-term development planning (1999-2003);



- Resource framework for the Palestinian Development Plan (1999-2003);
- General framework of the Palestinian Development Plan (1999-2003);
- Palestinian Development Plan: the preparation process
- The Palestinian Development Plan investment programme: sector priorities, implementation and follow-up;
- Palestinian Development Plan programmes and projects.

11. Due to the planning cycle that was already in progress at the time, the Palestinian Development Plan for 1999-2003 is a hybrid of detailed programmes and projects for three years (2000-2001) and future projections for the remaining two years (2002-2003). This would provide the initial planning scope foreseen for the sectors and provide a basis for planning activities in the subsequent comprehensive five-year plan (2000-2004), which will be available in mid-2000.

12. The Palestinian Development Plan represents the Palestinian Authority's willingness and ability to take control of its own development process, with the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation as its main planning body, and is a highly significant step forward in terms of Palestinian development planning capacity. The international community now has a greater opportunity to respond to these efforts in an equally constructive manner, basing assistance and interventions on the real needs and strategies carefully determined and set forth by the Palestinian Authority. This will allow the Palestinian development process to move into a phase of rational and coherent development based on the present realities. The Palestinian Development Plan was reinforced this year by the publication of the One-Year Action Plan for the year 2000. This document represents yet another step towards rationalizing the development process, as it provides the "priorities within the priorities" for the year at hand. Needs will outweigh resources in Palestinian development for many years to come. This Palestinian Development Plan and the accompanying Action Plan were created to allow for concentration on priority areas of development, for increased coordination and for coherent geographic coverage, according to strategies developed within the framework of available resources.

13. Both external and domestic challenges to the development process are identified in the Palestinian Development Plan. External constraints include the absence of freedom of movement between the West Bank and Gaza, the absence of an operational sea port and until recently of an airport; non-tariff barriers; the restrictions on freedom of movement and employment; and import/export restrictions. The Palestinian Development Plan also emphasizes that the absence of natural resources, neglected infrastructure and the limitations of a developing administration present the greatest challenges domestically. The Palestinian Development Plan takes these constraints into consideration and proposes alternative strategies in the event of certain constraints continuing or worsening.

14. Addressing and overcoming the problems and constraints facing the Palestinian development process require setting clear goals and objectives, and developing policies to be followed on the national, sectoral and subsectoral levels, as well as through the different ministries and institutions. The process also requires the identification of the priorities on which to concentrate in order to most effectively face the challenges standing in the way of the development process. In view of the difficulties and constraints being faced, the Palestinian Authority aspires to realize the following four major goals during the time span of the current five-year development plan: economic growth and employment generation; rural revival and development; improving social conditions/human resources development; and development of financial institutions and more effective macroeconomic policies.

15. The Palestinian Development Plan was formulated through a detailed planning process under the leadership of the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation that involved all sectors and ministries and an active network of focal points. The Palestinian Authority has received assistance from several international partners, including the United Nations system. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Bretton Woods institutions provide widespread support, including at the macro-level, to the Palestinian Authority, the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation and the Ministry of Finance in particular. Technical advisors and institutional support have been made available for long-term periods by UNDP. The World Bank is currently applying the methodology of its

comprehensive development framework to support strategic planning in several sectors.

16. More than 25 United Nations entities have provided development assistance during the past year. In line with the request of the Palestinian Authority, assistance was directed to the following areas: advocacy and awareness-raising, policy and strategy advice, planning and programming, transferring of know-how, lessons from developing countries, resource mobilization, facilitation to coordination and the funding and implementation of development projects.

17. Many of the United Nations specialized agencies have contributed expertise to the Palestinian Authority to help with sectoral policies and strategies, needs assessments and programme formulation. Sectoral plans have been completed for health, education and agriculture. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) expertise, together with UNDP support and financing from the Government of the Netherlands, assisted the Ministry of Agriculture for its plan for 2001-2005. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has contributed to the education sectoral plans and has been requested to provide further support. For health, several agencies, including the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) have provided support in general or in specialized areas. UNICEF's collaboration with the Palestinian Authority in formulating its new programme for the Palestinian people has impacted on Palestinian Authority policies and programmes. UNFPA is currently conducting its country population assessment with the Palestinian Authority, as a key preliminary step for its future programme cooperation. This process is an integral part of the Palestinian Authority's policy-making and planning. The International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) have advised on employment and enterprise development strategy. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the International Trade Centre (ITC) have advised on trade issues. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has provided advice on civil aviation development, and recently, the Palestinian Authority requested further help from the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to assist in planning the new port in Gaza. The United Nations development system has

therefore used its comparative expertise to help improve the Palestinian Authority's capacity and methods for planning, and to help assess unmet needs.

18. The total amount of funds required for 1999 in the Palestinian Development Plan was US\$ 720 million. Overall commitments for development activities for 1999 amounted to US\$ 546.8 million, down from US\$ 665.9 million in 1998, reflecting a shortfall of US\$ 173.2 million. Actual disbursements amounted to US\$ 417.1 million as of the fourth quarter of 1999. The amount of funds disbursed represented, about 58 per cent of the needs identified in the Palestinian Development Plan. The respective allocation of the total disbursement by category was as follows: public investment, 46 per cent; technical assistance, 25 per cent; private investment promotion, 7 per cent; in kind, 3 per cent; equipment, 2 per cent; budgetary assistance, 1 per cent; and employment generation, 1 per cent. This demonstrates the clear shift from the need for budget support to the financing of development projects. It is hoped that in future a clearer understanding of the Palestinian Development Plan by donors will result in broader and more appropriately targeted development assistance.

19. In order to address these priorities in a systematic way, the Palestinian Authority has tried to reflect public needs in terms of the four broad sectoral priorities which remain the same as in the first Palestinian Development Plan, as described below.

#### **A. Infrastructure and natural resource management**

20. This sector encompasses water and sanitation, housing, roads and transportation, sea and air ports and other general infrastructure projects. Infrastructure and related services underpin development in all sectors, and have a significant impact on popular perceptions of hardship or improvement in living conditions. Almost half of the total Palestinian Development Plan budget (48 per cent) is allocated to this sector for the five-year Palestinian Development Plan period. Infrastructure remains a top priority sector as years of neglect during the occupation of Palestinian territory have left a crumbling system. Although significant advances have been made in this sector, serious deficiencies remain in a number of areas. The Palestinian Development Plan identifies water and waste-water as the first priority

within this sector, and dedicates nearly 44 per cent of the sector budget to these areas.

21. Since the importance of road transport has increased significantly over the past few years and in view of the very poor condition of the roads in the occupied Palestinian territory, construction, expansion and rehabilitation programmes are given high priority in the Palestinian Development Plan. This subsector is virtually unsupported financially by the international donor community. In the third priority subsector of energy, attention is primarily focused on rural areas that do not have access to electricity. Solid waste disposal, another priority subsector, is also considerably underfunded. In the strategic and national projects subsector, the focus has been on developing the harbour, airport and safe passage, which are priorities at the national level.

22. The total budget for the entire sector for 1999 is US\$ 416.3 million. The water and sanitation subsector is considered the most pressing priority within this sector. The Palestinian Development Plan lists 20 projects for this subsector, covering the areas of water supply, sewerage and water resources at a total cost of US\$ 250.2 million. The costs of transportation and national projects are US\$ 76.3 million and US\$ 33.8 million, respectively. The budgets for the remaining six subsectors total approximately US\$ 56 million.

23. In the water and sanitation subsector, total disbursements in 1999 amounted to US\$ 111.7 million. Disbursements for transportation projects amounted to a total of approximately US\$ 18 million and for all other subsectors approximately US\$ 31 million, bringing the total disbursements for this sector in 1999 to US\$ 160.7 million. Consequently, only 38 per cent of the requirements identified in the Palestinian Development Plan was met, which represents a serious hindrance to the progress of development in the occupied Palestinian territory.

24. During the reporting period, 11 United Nations agencies were active in the infrastructure and resource management sector. The largest United Nations contributors to this sector were UNDP and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). Each was active in the priority subsector of sewerage and drinking water. UNDP began work on a sewage water system for the Khan Younis area in Gaza and made substantial progress on the Jericho water system. Meanwhile,

UNRWA's environmental health services provided improvements to the sewerage, drainage and water supply systems of the refugee camp population as part of its peace implementation programme. WHO was also active in this subsector, with a contribution from the European Commission Humanitarian Assistance Office (ECHO), allowing for the implementation of a project aimed at the rehabilitation and protection of existing water sources (springs and wells).

25. UNDP's other contributions to this sector include environmental conservation as part of a regional effort to preserve agro-biodiversity and the reclamation of degraded rangelands. UNRWA was also active in improving the system of solid waste disposal, and in the rehabilitation of shelters in refugee camps. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) has been active in water, irrigation and natural resources through its Ein El-Sultan Irrigation Project and Participatory Natural Resource Management Programme. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has been involved in this sector through projects designed to strengthen science and technology infrastructure and radiation safety infrastructure. The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is currently implementing activities related to the establishment of a Transmission Control Unit in the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications, and by providing necessary elements to the functioning of the Palestine News Agency (WAFA). United Nations Volunteers (UNV) activities included urban planning assistance for the preparation of detailed area plans of Bethlehem, Beit Jala and Beit Sahour. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) contribution involved sponsoring the participation of Palestinian Authority representatives in six regional workshops on environmental issues. Within the national projects subsector, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) is currently providing technical assistance for the establishment of a maritime administration for the Palestinian Authority project. The Universal Postal Union (UPU) has prepared a project to develop the Palestinian postal system, which is awaiting funding.

26. The Action Plan for 2000 provides a ranking of projects for the year according to national priority. Out of the top 50 projects, water and sanitation account for 17 projects, transportation (primarily roads) for 23 projects and other activities in this sector for seven projects. Coordinated efforts need be made to better cover the resource requirements of this sector, which is

considered essential to the overall quality of life of the Palestinian population.

## **B. Institutional capacity-building**

27. Institutional capacity-building has been of central importance since the Palestinian Authority came into being and assumed responsibility over the public sector, which serves approximately 3 million people. The objective in this sector is to strengthen the administrative management capacity of Palestinian ministries and numerous public institutions and to devise the legal and regulatory framework within which the Palestinian Authority's executive, legislative and judicial bodies carry out their responsibilities. Approximately 9 per cent of the total Palestinian Development Plan budget is allocated to this sector.

28. The priority area in this sector is institutional development. The Palestinian Development Plan emphasizes the necessity of moving away from reliance on foreign expertise in identifying and resolving development issues in order to foster sustainability in development planning and daily functioning. Technical assistance to raise the capacity of Palestinian Authority civil servants and their institutions is encouraged. Therefore, training, strengthening institutions with the range of equipment necessary for effective functioning and technical assistance programmes that work hand-in-hand with Palestinian Authority counterparts to ensure dissemination of knowledge and expertise are priorities.

29. Other priorities within this sector include strengthening of the legal and regulatory framework and democracy development. Enhancing the legal and regulatory environment and systems is key to encouraging private sector-led growth of the economy, while also encouraging the continued support of donors. A transparent and appropriate legal and regulatory framework is crucial if institutions are to operate effectively. In addition, the Palestinian Development Plan emphasizes the necessity of establishing a stable democratic government. It calls for the fundamental elements of democracy to be widely disseminated and for foundations to be built to maintain its sustainability.

30. Although commitments of nearly US\$ 100 million were made for institutional development,

US\$ 37.6 million was actually disbursed, nearly reaching the US\$41 million that was budgeted for this subsector in the Palestinian Development Plan for 1999. The area of democracy development was also well covered, with disbursements of approximately US\$ 7 million. However, in the subsectors of legal and regulatory framework and of the police, disbursements amounted to only US\$ 3 and US\$ 2 million, respectively.

31. Through its broad-sweeping UNICEF/Palestinian Authority master plan of operations for Palestinian children and women, UNICEF has implemented many capacity-building and technical assistance activities, including training and/or material support to the Ministries of Health, Education, Social Services and Justice, local NGOs, Al-Quds University and others. Training covered the areas of child health, child development, parenting, education, the Palestinian Child Rights Charter and the Convention of the Rights of the Child. UNDP is involved in technical assistance/capacity-building on several levels, including in poverty alleviation with the Ministry of Planning, issues concerning the disabled with the Ministry of Health and law and gender policy with the Palestinian Legislative Council. Its activities also included working closely with the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Finance, among others. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has been engaged in providing material and technical assistance towards strengthening institutions whose work relates to the rule of law in general and human rights in particular. UNFPA and WHO have been working together in strengthening the technical and human resource capabilities of the Ministry of Health, NGOs and the primary health care sector on reproductive health. This has included guidelines and protocol for reproductive health services, training for physicians and nurses and awareness-raising. WHO has also been providing technical assistance and training with the Ministry of Health for water quality monitoring and disease control (brucellosis control programme). UNRWA has provided a wide range of training and technical assistance to the Ministry of Health and local NGOs. The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) has been working with NGOs and donors in order to develop the women in development/gender in development sector, and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), UNCTAD and UNDP have

carried out a joint training programme in international commercial diplomacy.

32. The ILO's technical cooperation programme is aimed at building the human and institutional capacities of different institutions in fields of its competence, such as the Chamber of Commerce and the Ministry of Labour, among others. The United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP)/Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention has been active in three priority areas through its multisectoral drug control assistance to the Palestinian Authority project: legal and institutional framework concerning drug control, capacity-building amongst law enforcement agencies and capacity-building in the social affairs and health sectors. UNV provided technical assistance in urban planning to several different municipalities, and ITU provided training for engineers and technicians from the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications and to the staff of WAFA. FAO is currently implementing a capacity-building project in the areas of agricultural policy analysis and planning. IAEA has two ongoing projects for human resource and manpower development. ESCWA activities have included training and advisory activities in the production, use and dissemination of statistics, particularly gender-related statistics, training programmes organized for the Palestine Monetary Authorities and for the Palestinian Planning Unit, and assistance to the Minister of Social Affairs in the preparation of a report on the advancement of women in the occupied Palestinian territory.

33. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has been very active in continuing its support to the Palestinian Authority in the preparation of legislation affecting human rights and in its work towards establishing a national plan of action for human rights. UNDP works with the Women's Unit of the Palestinian Legislative Council in order to bring gender issues to the forefront of legislative efforts. It also supports the Ministry of Justice and is funding the production of a legal journal. IMO is assisting the Department of Transport in Gaza in drawing up draft maritime legislation. Both the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and UNDCP have offered training for the Palestinian police. The Office offers training primarily in the areas of human rights and rule of law, while UNDCP has provided training in law

enforcement surrounding drug control. The Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator supports coordination and donor assistance for the establishment of a police academy, with cost-sharing provided by the Government of Denmark. At the request of the Palestinian Authority, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs has drafted proposals for four projects to provide technical assistance in the areas of public expenditure management, aid management and revenue administration. Funding is currently being sought for these projects.

34. In the areas of institutional development and democracy development, the funding needs in the Palestinian Development Plan were well covered in 1999. However, a preliminary analysis indicates that actual disbursement was not in line with the Palestinian Development Plan. While one third of the US\$ 41.3 million in the budget in the Palestinian Development Plan for institutional development was for public building projects only, an insignificant portion of the US\$ 37.6 million disbursed was for this purpose. In the other crucial areas of legal and regulatory framework and of the police, the funds fell well short of the needs in 1999. Given the importance of these subsectors at this stage of the development process, these should be considered as priorities in 2000. Nearly all United Nations agencies have provided technical assistance in some sort to institutional development, in line with the Palestinian Authority priority of training and in-depth building of local expertise. The abundance of agencies working in this subsector illustrates the urgent need for more effective coordination in order for the Palestinian Authority and all agencies involved to benefit from the various activities that are being undertaken to the largest extent possible.

35. According to the Action Plan for 2000 and in line with the shortfall mentioned above, priority projects include, first and foremost, a variety of building construction projects. In addition, more capacity-building and human resource development projects are emphasized. The Palestinian Development Plan budget for this entire subsector in 2000 is US\$ 51 million. Thus institutional development remains a priority in 2000 in order to continue on the momentum of the technical assistance provided to date and to gain ground on the construction and rehabilitation of needed public buildings. Due to the need to reinforce institutions which facilitate the implementation of the rule of law and to strengthen the regulatory framework

in 1999 and given that the resources needed for these increase significantly in 2000, these areas also remain a priority, especially considering the importance of a legal and regulatory framework needed to support the institutional structures currently being put into place.

### **C. Human resources and social development**

36. This sector is wide-ranging, covering such crucial subsectors as health, education, housing, social welfare, women and human rights. The majority of United Nations agencies are working in at least one area within this sector. The importance of the various subsectors cannot be overstated, as they are key to achieving development, democratization and stability. Nearly 25 per cent of the Palestinian Development Plan budget is allocated to this sector over the five-year period.

37. The Palestinian Authority considers education to be the top priority in this sector. Deteriorated and inadequate facilities are the main problems faced by the education system, particularly given the six per cent annual increase in student population. Eighty per cent of schools in Gaza and 20 per cent in the West Bank are still operating on double-shifts and in some cases in Gaza even on triple shifts. The construction of new schools is essential to allow for an increase in the number of school hours per child and to reduce class size. Over the first three years of the Palestinian Development Plan, about 53 per cent (US\$117 million) of the education subsector budget has been allocated to primary and secondary education for rehabilitation or new construction of infrastructure, excluding vocational secondary education. Other elements considered crucial to raising the standard of education include equipment and facilities, as well as capacity-building through teacher training and curriculum development.

38. The second priority in this sector is health. Unlike education, many forms of health services can be provided by the private sector. Therefore, the priority in this subsector is on primary health care to ensure that basic services are available to all communities in all governorates, with an emphasis on reaching remote and rural communities. The third priority subsector is refugee camps. Refugee camps are home to 590,000 Palestinians who are in need of substantial assistance. Overcrowding and poor sanitary and health conditions

in most camps call for intensive upgrading and rehabilitation on an urgent basis. The fourth priority subsector covers detainees and ex-detainees. The Palestinian Authority recognizes the importance of assisting and reintegrating the large number of ex-prisoners and their families. Many are suffering physical, mental and economic problems even years after their release. Many require specialized care, training and assistance to facilitate their reintegration into society. Consequently, about 2 per cent of the budget for this sector is allocated to this subsector over the five-year period.

39. The Palestinian Development Plan clearly emphasises the urgent need for support for education. Out of the total allocation of US\$ 144.5 million for the sector, the Palestinian Development Plan budgeted nearly US\$ 62 million for education in 1999, the bulk of which (approximately 70 per cent) is dedicated to the building of schools or rehabilitation of existing schools, with the remainder going to educational capacity-building and vocational training. In 1999, US\$ 34.9 million was disbursed for the education subsector. Approximately US\$ 20.5 million was spent on school construction or rehabilitation, while the balance covered primarily technical assistance projects. Health is the other major priority within this sector, for which the Palestinian Development Plan budgeted US\$ 38.3 million for 1999. The bulk of this budget was directed towards construction of clinics and hospitals, while one-fourth of the budget was for health capacity-building. US\$ 34.8 were disbursed in the health subsector, of which US\$ 6.2 million was for construction or rehabilitation of health structures and the remainder for equipment and technical assistance. Allocation for other areas in this sector, were as follows: refugees: US\$ 14.9 million; humanitarian aid: US\$ 8.3 million; detainees and ex-detainees: US\$ 4.5 million; women: US\$ 5.6 million; human rights and civil society: US\$ 500,000; youth: US\$ 3.6 million; and culture: US\$ 6.8 million. US\$ 4 million was disbursed for humanitarian assistance approximately US\$ 1 million each for detainees and ex-detainees, youth and women. Disbursement figures are not currently available for the areas of human rights, refugees or culture. The total disbursements for this sector thus amounted to approximately US\$ 76.7 million.

40. In the education subsector, UNRWA's 264 elementary and secondary schools accommodated

223,258 pupils in the 1999/2000 school year, an increase of 11,422 over the previous year. Although a certain amount of construction and upgrading of UNRWA schools took place, lack of funds and sites for school construction has meant that many schools continue to be accommodated in unsatisfactory rented premises and suffer from overcrowding and lack of educational facilities. UNRWA also runs four vocational and technical training centres, with a total of 2,036 trainees. Merit-based scholarships were awarded to 253 refugee students to universities in the region. Among its various activities, UNICEF has provided technical assistance to the Ministry of Education in the establishment of the five-year Educational Plan for Palestine, as well as in other areas. The ILO headed a project for the establishment of the Sheikh Khalifa Vocational Rehabilitation Centre for the disabled. The UNESCO/Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator programme in favour of the Palestinian People (PAPP) have been engaged in a range of rehabilitation and technical assistance activities relevant to the education system, including the establishment of the curriculum development centre, school rehabilitation projects, provision of teaching materials and policy analysis of the Ministry of Education's five-year plan.

41. In the area of health, WHO has been working closely with the Ministry of Health on a variety of levels, including the Palestinian essential drugs programme, immunization, monitoring of water quality, disease control and provision of laboratory equipment and training. In addition, WHO and UNFPA have been working intensively on the integration of reproductive health services into primary health care. UNRWA is the largest United Nations contributor to the health sector in the occupied Palestinian territory (US\$ 23 million in 1999), operating 51 primary health-care facilities, which handled approximately 3.5 million patient visits in 1999. Rehabilitation services were provided through 13 physiotherapy clinics and six maternity units, which were integrated within its centres in Gaza. UNRWA provided secondary health care for the refugee population through special arrangements with various hospitals, or through the Agency's 43-bed Qalquilia hospital in the West Bank. It continued its involvement in the project for the 232-bed European Gaza Hospital, which should begin treating out-patients in July 2000 and in-patients in October 2000, and should be fully operational in January 2001. UNRWA's environmental health

projects included improvements to sewerage, drainage and water supply systems and solid waste disposal. Among its many health-related activities, UNICEF continued its support for the national immunization campaign for school children, as well as for the Ministry of Health's school health promotion project, and for women's health and nutrition projects, and provided a range of training and technical assistance to the Ministry of Health and local NGOs. The UNDCP drug control assistance project provided training to health and social workers concerning drug abuse and demand reduction. UNDP assisted the Ministry of Health in developing programmes related to prevention and early detection of disabilities.

42. UNRWA has been very active in the relief and social services sector, including material and financial assistance to destitute families, the registration of refugees, works in refugee camps and the sponsorship of various community centres. The World Food Programme (WFP) has been active in its social safety net scheme, in support to small-scale farmers and fishermen and in offering financial support to NGOs working in the social sector. UNDP has been working with the Palestinian Authority to develop policies and practices leading to poverty alleviation, and supported the publication of the second *Human Development Report* covering 1998-1999. The ILO was involved in implementing projects of rehabilitation and income generation for ex-detainees and for disabled people.

43. In the area of human rights, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has begun intensive work with six ministries towards the formulation of a national plan of action for human rights, and has continued to offer material and technical assistance for strengthening institutions whose work relates to the rule of law and human rights. UNICEF has been involved in a variety of advocacy activities, including the development of the Children's Rights Charter and training of professionals on the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

44. UNFPA, UNIFEM, UNDP and ESCWA have all been active in the area of women/gender. UNIFEM is implementing three projects designed to develop women's entrepreneurship, promote women in development and establish plans for the advancement of women, among other related objectives. As part of its activities geared towards reproductive health, UNFPA has been involved in the support of women's centres providing different types of counselling, raising

awareness of gender issues and in the revision of the women's health and health education component of the national strategic health plan (1999-2003). UNDP continues advocating gender equality through, among other things, its promotion of equal opportunities in the civil service. ESCWA has continued support of the Gender Statistics Unit and provided technical assistance to the Palestinian Authority in the preparation of the national report on the advancement of women in the Palestinian territories in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs. IFAD, as part of its relief and development programme, has been providing training to women through its business service centre and financing income-generating activities for groups of women. UNDP, through its *Sharek* project, is involved in empowering young people to participate in and contribute to the development of Palestinian society. UNV has also placed volunteers in the youth and community participatory development sector.

45. The Palestinian Development Plan budgets for construction and rehabilitation in both the education and health subsectors have increased significantly over the years and rank very highly in the Action Plan for 2000. Both the Action Plan for 2000 and the Palestinian Development Plan budget for 2000 reflect significant increases in the budgets needed for education and health, indicating their importance for overall development efforts. In addition, the six other subsectors of this area, which were all undercovered in 1999, are areas warranting increased support for a successful development process.

#### **D. Productive sectors**

46. The productive sectors include industry, tourism, agriculture and income-generating activities, to a large extent involving the private sector. Private sector activity has been identified by the Palestinian Authority and donors as the potential engine to drive the Palestinian economy. Public support to economic sectors is vital for the private enterprise to do its share in developing the Palestinian economy. Hence, the Palestinian Authority wishes to concentrate on efforts to provide an enabling environment for the private sector to start up activities, while financial needs of private sector activities themselves will be obtained through loans. Approximately 17 per cent or about US\$ 765 million of the total PDP budget is allocated for productive sector development over the five-year

period. The primary goal in the productive sector is to work towards industrialization. However, since industrialization will require necessary infrastructure, independence of movement and trade to become a dependable economic source and years to achieve an effective productive capacity, agriculture will in the meantime be the leading productive sector.

47. Historically, agriculture has been the principal source of economic activity for Palestinians. In recent years, more efficient and effective means of production have been introduced and some major advances have been made. These technologies now need to be reinforced and extended in order to maximize effectiveness and benefits in addition to the need to reclaim land, which has been neglected during many years of occupation, primarily for agricultural use. Food security is also a priority area as otherwise, the Palestinian population would be dependent on Israel for its basic food needs. Thus, agriculture is considered the first priority in this sector followed by industry, which will become the first priority once the framework for its full implementation is realized and agriculture has become a more stable subsector.

48. Within the industrial subsector, priority is placed on the development of industrial estates which are expected to create approximately 20,000 new job opportunities each. Tourism will always be an important potential contributor to economic growth. However, until freedom of movement to and from the West Bank and Gaza governorates is realized and visitors can visit all Palestinian areas without hindrances, this subsector will continue to face problems. Nonetheless, the infrastructure and framework for a strong tourism subsector can be achieved in the coming few years in anticipation of an environment more conducive to tourism. This is also the case for the preservation of archaeological sites within this subsector.

49. The Palestinian Development Plan sets the needs for 1999 in this sector as follows: agriculture: US\$ 7.5 million; industrial development: US\$ 8 million; tourism and archaeology: US\$ 69.4 million; other: US\$ 12.8 million. As presented in the Palestinian Development Plan, the first priority is to develop quickly in the area of agriculture, while preparing the terrain for an increase in industrial activities over the next 5 years. Accordingly, the Palestinian Development Plan budgets for agriculture increase dramatically over the 1999 budget during the period of 2000–2001,



dropping off again in 2002-2003. Industrial development (which includes small and medium enterprises) budgets increase gradually over the five-year period, from US\$ 8 million in 1999 to US\$ 79 million in 2003. The Palestinian Development Plan budget for tourism and archaeology was high for 1999, due primarily to Bethlehem 2000, which represented a pressing priority in 1999. The overall budget for this sector was US\$ 97.7 million. Disbursements for agriculture amounted to US\$ 8 million for tourism and archaeology US\$ 18 million, for industrial development US\$ 2 million and for the private sector US\$ 6 million: a total of US\$ 34 million for all the subsectors.

50. United Nations involvement in this sector covers the three main priority areas of agriculture, industry and tourism. UNWRA continued to expand its income generation programmes aimed at creating job opportunities and developing enterprise activity by providing microfinance credit to small enterprises. This programme has grown to be the largest supplier of financial services to the microenterprise sector in the occupied Palestinian territory. UNIDO is involved in establishing a project entitled "UNIDO support programme to Palestinian industry" which is in the preparatory phase and includes a study tour to Tunisia for Ministry of Industry representatives and the recruitment of national experts. The programme will include the setting up of an industrial upgrading programme on a pilot basis, which will consist of various activities designed to build capacity in the Ministry of Industry and in the private sector. ITC has sponsored the participation of the Palestine Trade Centre in four buyers/sellers meetings in the region, as part of its regional programme. ITC also carried out a mission to the Palestinian areas in March 2000 in order to lay the groundwork for a project focusing on craft enterprise development and commercialization of artisanal products. A project document is being finalized and priority areas for technical cooperation in this and other areas have been identified. Another mission designed to further assess the needs and potentials of the Palestinian business community was carried out in May 2000.

51. A joint training programme in commercial diplomacy was organized together by UNITAR/UNCTAD/UNDP for the Palestinian Authority. This programme was divided into three sessions and one high-level symposium. UNIFEM continued its project

with the Ministry of Social Affairs, entitled "Development of women's entrepreneurship on Gaza (1997-2000)". The objectives of this project include increasing women's participation in the private sector and ensuring higher income levels. UNCTAD has continued to support a variety of technical cooperation activities during the project period, including a feasibility study concerning an industrial estate in Nablus; strengthening trade efficiency in a variety of areas, the above-mentioned training in commercial diplomacy and support to enterprise development. The ILO was engaged in several projects, including its Palestinian employment programme.

52. ESCWA conducted a training programme in November 1999 on agricultural issues and policies with the Palestinian Planning Unit. Two project documents and two proposals have been developed for this subsector. IAEA continued its medfly control project. WFP has continued its support of small-scale farmers in Gaza, and also supported a land reclamation project, through Catholic Relief Services, with 720 participating families. Among other related activities, UNDP continued its activities involving the reclamation of degraded rangelands, which resulted in the rehabilitation of agricultural land and generated work for thousands of unemployed Palestinians. IFAD continued supporting a range of agricultural activities through its relief and development programme and its participatory natural resource management programme. FAO continued its "Capacity-building in agricultural policy analysis and planning" project, and is planning another four related projects pending the receipt of necessary funding.

53. UNV has begun work on establishing a corps of archaeological cultural heritage volunteers, with the recruitment of one national and one international architect. UNESCO headed the emergency action plan for Bethlehem 2000, opening the way for the development of pilgrimages and cultural tourism in Palestine. In addition, UNESCO's PAPP projects included restoration of mosaics and training in cultural heritage preservation. UNEP held a variety of regional workshops, through its Regional Office for West Asia, on trade and tourism, in which representatives of the Palestinian Authority participated.

54. In 1999, disbursements in the productive sector amounted to US\$ 33 million, compared to the requirement of US\$ 97.7. Agriculture, which had a budget of US\$ 7.5 million in the Palestinian

Development Plan, was relatively well covered with disbursements of approximately US\$ 7 million. Disbursements for industrial development at US\$ 2 million, fell well short of the Palestinian Development Plan budget of more than US\$ 8 million. Tourism and archaeology, while accounting for the largest disbursement in this sector by far (US\$ 18 million) still fell far short of the target budget of US\$ 69.4 million. Private sector disbursements, falling under the Palestinian Development Plan category of "Other support projects", received US\$ 6 million, compared to US\$ 12.8 million budgeted for this category.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

55. The present report has highlighted the evolution of assistance to the occupied Palestinian territory and its people from both United Nations and other sources, taking note of the trends and how priority needs are being addressed. In general, progress has continued to be made in meeting some of the urgent and most significant priorities that confront the Palestinian Authority and people. Additional support is necessary to address basic human needs. Technical and financial support is also required to improve the physical environment and infrastructure, including water, energy and transportation. Institutions and human resources need to be strengthened further to cope with these challenges. The Palestinian Authority, with some support from the United Nations and other international partners, has undertaken institutional, economic and financial reforms, which would also benefit from assistance to ensure their implementation and impact.

56. The planning processes and plans of the Palestinian Authority have become more effective in the past three years and this has brought greater clarity on the unmet needs and has helped to justify the strategic priorities. Institutional mechanisms which have been established to facilitate dialogue and coordination between the Palestinian Authority and donors are working well and are supported by the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator, in collaboration with the World Bank and other United Nations specialized agencies.

57. During the past year, United Nations organizations and specialised agencies have continued to play a significant and special role in support of the Palestinian people. The United Nations development

system has continued to work as a complement and supplement to other partners in the international community and has implemented sizeable multilateral and bilateral assistance. There are increasing initiatives among United Nations bodies to coordinate programmes of activity. UNRWA and UNDP, respectively, administer special, large-scale programmes, as mandated. The Bretton Woods institutions also play specially effective roles. Other funds and programmes and many specialized agencies of the United Nations system are making important contributions, in a responsive and innovative way, to the socio-economic development priorities.

58. It is evident that many needs have been met and that due largely to the strengthening of the Palestinian Authority's capacities for planning and policy making, the Palestinian Development Plan has been increasingly employed to influence the direction of donor assistance. However, lack of sufficient assistance in certain priority sectors/subsectors has left the planned development process lagging in crucial areas. In the process of development cooperation, the coverage of priority needs should continue to be examined: in monetary terms, in terms of whether or not the funds available are being well targeted to the real needs and priorities spelled out by the Palestinian Authority and in terms of information exchange and cooperation between donors, to foster complementarity and avoid overlap. Therefore, continued coordination between the Palestinian Authority and the donor community, and within the donor community itself, is vital if Palestinian development is to evolve and attain its intended objectives in a coherent and sustainable manner.

59. Progress in the development of the occupied Palestinian territory has been facilitated by the very considerable assistance provided by the international community with a total of approximately US\$ 2.75 billion having been disbursed between 1993 and 1999. At the same time, I am concerned about the declining trend of both new commitments and disbursements for development cooperation in spite of the present special needs and the challenges that lie ahead. The Palestinian institutions and the Palestinian Development Plan serve as a reasonable framework for further international assistance and a sound basis for ongoing dialogue to guide future development collaboration. The circumstances, assumptions, and exigencies which affect the occupied Palestinian territory and people will

continue to evolve in the coming period. I call upon the international community to provide the necessary resources and to demonstrate flexibility in their support for the development programmes for the Palestinian people.



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Granting of Independence to Colonial  
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agencies and the international institutions  
associated with the United Nations**

**Assistance to the Palestinian people**

**Report of the Secretary-General**

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## I. Introduction

1. This report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 55/173, of 14 December 2000, on assistance to the Palestinian people, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to it at its fifty-sixth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the resolution. The present report covers the period from June 2000 to May 2001.

2. A separate report, prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan (A/56/90-E/2001/17), has been submitted to the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council. It should be noted that information concerning the living conditions of the Palestinian people is also provided in periodic reports prepared by the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator (UNSCO).

3. In September 1999, the Secretary-General reconfigured the mandate of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories, whose title was changed to United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority. In addition to his responsibilities relating to the occupied Palestinian territory, the Special Coordinator was given responsibilities for coordinating United Nations assistance related to the peace process in Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic. Throughout the period under review, the Special Coordinator has maintained his efforts to fulfil the mandate of his office, including ensuring effective coordination between the relevant institutions of the Palestinian Authority, United Nations and the international community, as well as documenting economic and social conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory. He has also provided periodic analyses on these matters and special reports on specific issues.

4. During the reporting period, the realities and priorities in the occupied Palestinian territory have shifted significantly due to the current crisis, which began on 28 September 2000. Starting from that date,

intensive violence has occurred throughout the occupied Palestinian territory and in Israel, resulting in the deaths of several hundred Palestinians, the wounding of tens of thousands of Palestinians and the deaths of over one hundred Israelis. Both in terms of loss of life and in terms of its impact on the peace process, this period constitutes the deepest crisis in the Middle East since the signing of the Declaration of Principles in 1993.

5. Apart from loss of life and injuries, the current crisis has been characterized by severe internal and external closures of both the West Bank and Gaza. This has resulted in large-scale losses to the Palestinian economy, wiping out more than three years of prior growth. The impact of the closures is monitored by the Special Coordinator and reported on periodically. According to the latest report of the Special Coordinator, the Palestinian economy has likely experienced over 50 per cent income losses, while unemployment has at least tripled. The impact on the livelihoods of the Palestinian people has been devastating.

6. The principal challenge for the United Nations system in the period preceding the current crisis was the attempt to underpin peace talks and efforts to advance the political process with programmes and projects leading to long-term sustainable development. Within the current context, characterized by violent conflict, the United Nations has placed new emphasis on emergency humanitarian interventions, coordinated through a Humanitarian Task Force on Emergency Needs. Additionally, there is a pressing need for rehabilitation of the Palestinian economy and institutions, even while conflict continues. Addressing the current economic and social needs of the Palestinian people is a necessary step towards restoring support for the peace process, which has dropped in tandem with living conditions.

7. The present report provides an analysis both of United Nations development assistance to the Palestinian people in the period before the outbreak of the conflict and of the measures taken to address the new emergency situation. Emphasis is placed on the quick and effective response of the United Nations system in shifting from a development focus to emergency humanitarian assistance.

## **II. Development assistance (June-September 2000)**

8. Following the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements in 1993, the occupied Palestinian territory became one of the largest recipients of development assistance in the world, in per capita terms, a fact which facilitated progress in its development. This assistance is coordinated through the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee and the Local Aid Coordination Committee, to which the United Nations family of agencies is represented by the Special Coordinator, who serves as co-chair of the Local Aid Coordination Committee.

9. The scale of donor assistance reflected their commitment to supporting the peace process and the efforts of the parties to reach a just, lasting and comprehensive peace. To date, pledges amounting to a total of \$5.760 million have been made, compared to \$5.724 million in 1999. The United Nations presence in the occupied Palestinian territory also reflected this commitment, increasing from three organizations in 1993 to 12 in 2000. In addition, many other organizations of the United Nations system have provided technical assistance and expertise to the Palestinian Authority over the years. In December 2000, the Office of the Special Coordinator issued a summary report on the sixth annual inter-agency meeting held in June 2000. The report presented a framework for cooperation between the resident and non-resident United Nations agencies and the Palestinian Authority. It also reflected sector-specific priorities and an integrated approach to development initiatives by the United Nations system.

10. This section of the report will address the development-oriented activities of the United Nations system during the period from June to September 2000. It presents activities in terms of sectors, along the same sectoral distinctions found in the Palestinian Development Plan of the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation.

### **A. Infrastructure and natural resource management**

11. Infrastructure and related services underpin development in all sectors and almost half of the total budget of the Palestinian Development Plan was

dedicated to this sector. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Health Organization (WHO) were each involved in projects designed to improve sewerage, drainage and water supply systems in different regions of the West Bank and Gaza, guaranteeing a clean water supply to thousands of residents. UNRWA also continued its peace implementation programme, an initiative launched in 1993, which now includes 243 current or future projects oriented towards infrastructure and improvement of employment and socio-economic conditions. UNDP utilized over \$27 million to complete several major infrastructure projects, including the rehabilitation of 70 clinics and primary health care centres in remote areas throughout the West Bank and the restoration of water supply distribution networks to Jericho and Hebron. UNDP worked closely with the donor community and the Ministry of Justice in order to finalize the designs for a new courthouse in Nablus. In addition, UNDP launched a project for the construction of the south wing of the Gaza International Airport. Its technical assistance and infrastructure support to local administration was also expanded. The International Maritime Organization (IMO) is currently implementing a project of technical assistance (total budget: \$232,000) to the Palestinian Authority for the establishment of a maritime administration. IMO is also, at the request of UNDP, assisting the Palestinian Authority in securing the funds necessary for the construction of the Gaza seaport. A children's library in Bethlehem is currently being established by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), at the cost of \$303,000, through the restoration of a traditional building in the old city. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is in the process of preparing a report on the environmental situation in the West Bank and Gaza.

### **B. Institutional capacity-building**

12. This sector has been of central importance as the Palestinian Authority is responsible for the public sector, which serves approximately three million people. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) provided a range of training courses, documentation and materials for Palestinian Police Force commanders, officers and

trainers, as well as for non-governmental organizations (NGOs). OHCHR also provided technical and financial assistance to various Palestinian organizations to allow them to conduct legal research and workshops. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) facilitated technical assistance and funding, for the purpose of a census, to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. UNESCO developed phase II of its project entitled "Capacity-building and training on environmental planning and management". UNDP is supporting the Palestinian gateway project, implemented by the World Bank, which will improve access of the public and private sectors to information and communication technologies. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), with a budget of \$188,000, provided assistance to the Palestinian Authority in the form of expert services, training and equipment. The International Labour Organization (ILO) assisted the Ministry of Labour and employers' and workers' organizations in capacity-building and establishing a national strategy for the protection of workers from occupational hazards (total budget \$30,000). UNEP provided support to representatives of the Palestinian Authority allowing them to participate in one global ministerial meeting and nine regional expert meetings covering various issues surrounding environment and natural resource management. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) provided considerable training for the carrying out of a health survey in 2000. It has also strengthened the district-level capacity of the Ministry of Education to monitor the five-year education plan.

### **C. Human resources and social development**

13. **Education:** UNRWA was the largest United Nations contributor in the education sector, with a programme budget of \$75.5 million. It is in charge of 263 agency-run elementary and preparatory schools, accommodating 233,172 pupils in the 2000/2001 school year. The Agency's four vocational and technical training centres provided post-elementary and post-secondary programmes to 2,036 trainees. In addition to regular in-service training programmes for education staff, the educational sciences faculty at the Ramallah training centres offered pre-service training leading to a first university degree for 600 trainees. Merit-based scholarships were awarded to 253 Palestinian refugee students for study at universities in

the region. UNICEF was active in this sector through the implementation of its basic education programme, which included two projects: "Quality, equity and relevance of primary education", and "Community education for young children, adolescents and youth". UNESCO provided a range of technical assistance to the Ministry of Education, including in the areas of inclusive education, pre-school teaching and joint preparation of the "Manual for School Construction". The "Palestinian school-net project", supported by UNDP, will connect thousands of students to the vast educational resources available on the Internet.

14. **Health:** UNRWA, with a budget of \$25.3 million for 2000, operated 51 health facilities in order to provide comprehensive primary health care. These facilities handled 3.3 million patient visits. Rehabilitation services were provided through 13 physiotherapy clinics, while six maternity units, integrated within the Agency's health centres in Gaza, provided intra-partum care to women. Secondary care was made available to refugee patients through a combination of contractual agreements with non-governmental and private hospitals and partial reimbursement of treatment costs and directly at the Agency's 43-bed Qalquilia hospital in the West Bank. The 238-bed European Gaza Hospital, a joint project between UNRWA, the European Union and the Palestinian Authority, became fully operational in October 2000 and was handed over to the Palestinian Ministry of Health. WHO continued to implement a variety of activities through its "Special Technical Assistance Programme". UNICEF implemented its health and nutrition programme. The project activities included immunization campaigns and training in immunization management and monitoring. Under the school health promotion subproject, all children entering Grade 1 (55,000 a year) receive physical and developmental screening and screening for other grades in Gaza and oral health screening in the West Bank has also been accomplished. In cooperation with the Ministry of Social Affairs, UNICEF also provided training to nursery teachers in 12 districts in psychosocial health, first aid and evacuation. During the reporting period, UNFPA continued to implement its programmes in reproductive health. These included strengthening the technical and human resource capabilities for policy, planning and service delivery. The Fund worked in collaboration with UNICEF, WHO, the Ministry of Health and the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics to complete a health survey



for 2000. Data from this report was published and made available in January 2001. A significant development in the UNICEF health and nutrition project was the first local production of iodized salt. This was achieved in cooperation with the Ministries of Health, Supplies, Trade and Industry.

15. **Social welfare:** UNRWA's special hardship programme provided direct material and financial assistance to 101,893 refugees to cover food, shelter and other basic needs. The Agency sponsored 25 women's programme centres, 20 community rehabilitation and 26 youth activity centres as well as a rehabilitation centre for the visually impaired in Gaza, through which targeted social services were provided. The World Food Programme (WFP) concentrated its development activities on poverty alleviation and social relief interventions. These included the "Protracted relief and recovery operation", which began in June 2000, for the alleviation of the effects of the economic crisis in the occupied Palestinian territory on the most vulnerable groups of the Palestinian non-refugee population, covering more than 100,000 people. This operation also targets additional 4,000 beneficiaries through eight selected NGO-operated institutions for the handicapped and orphaned or abandoned children. UNDP's ongoing efforts to alleviate poverty were marked in the reporting period by the initiation of the "Palestinian participatory poverty assessment". The project will provide the methodological instruments necessary for the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation to implement the poverty alleviation programme, also supported by UNDP.

16. **Human rights:** A joint UNDP/OHCHR task force facilitated micro-grants to five Palestinian NGOs under OHCHR's "assisting communities together project", enabling them to carry out community activities focusing on human rights. In order to continue its work for the development of child-focused legislation and policy, UNICEF implemented its "advocacy and capacity building programme". UNDP, through the United Nations Volunteers programme, provided an international lawyer to support and assist with these projects. In preparation for the twenty-seventh special session of the General Assembly for follow-up to the World Summit for Children, UNICEF and UNFPA provided technical and financial assistance to the comprehensive multi-indicator cluster survey in order to update data on the situation of children and women.

UNICEF supported the Ministry of Education in introducing parallel education as a preventative strategy against child labour. Several training workshops on the Convention on the Rights of the Child were held for teachers and social workers. UNICEF also provided technical and financial assistance for the drafting of the first Palestinian child rights charter, which is to be finalized and submitted to the Palestinian Legislative Council in 2001. The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), through its women's human rights programme, provided support to initiatives from Palestinian NGOs on violence against women.

17. **Women:** UNIFEM continued to implement its post-Beijing follow-up operation phase II project. The focus of this project is on institution capacity-building, gender mainstreaming and formulation of action plan strategies via the national women's machineries. During the reporting period, the project activities aimed at building the capacity of the inter-ministerial commission for the advancement of women, the General Union of Palestinian Women and the NGO network to implement their mandate according to the Beijing Platform for Action. UNRWA promotes credit to women through its solidarity group lending programme, which provides loans solely to women-owned microenterprises. This is a programme that, in addition to being targeted at women, is also largely staffed by women, as the Agency feels this holistic approach is the best way to secure women's economic participation in the economy of the West Bank and Gaza. During 2000, this programme provided 3,900 loans to women on an individual and group guarantee basis. These loans were valued at \$2.98 million. UNDP placed a team of two international and eight national specialists from the United Nations Volunteers to supervise the "choose a future" project, which was designed to empower young women from underprivileged areas. During the course of the project, 150 schoolgirls and 14 teachers received a range of training that combined gender awareness and empowerment with high-tech training in video and computer skills.

#### **D. Productive sectors**

18. The productive sectors include industry, tourism, agriculture and income-generating activities, to a large extent involving the private sector. UNDP is involved

in activities supporting rural and economic development, environmental protection and agricultural production. These include a project to improve energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, water harvesting and the reclamation of degraded rangelands. One such project involves the cleaning of Wadi Gaza, at a cost of \$3.5 million, and turning it into a nature reserve. UNESCO has been involved in several initiatives designed to safeguard cultural heritage. These have included the second phase of a project for the conservation of the Qasr Hisham Palace and its mosaics (\$198,000) and the provision of equipment for protecting the archaeological site of Jericho, as well as training seminars. UNDP and the United Nations Volunteers programme assisted in these projects, through the provision of an international architect and a national cultural heritage specialist. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) continued its integrated support programme for Palestinian industry. During the reporting period, this programme has included creating and training a team of experts from the Ministry of Industry and the Palestinian Federation of Industries in the identification, assessment and selection of pilot-enterprises for industrial upgrading. An agreement was reached with the Palestinian Authority for establishing an industrial investment promotion unit within the Ministry of Industry. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has developed 10 technical assistance projects covering various aspects of commercial diplomacy, enterprise development, sustainable development and other issues surrounding trade and finance. The outbreak of the current crisis forced suspension of all of these project activities, some of which were resumed in a limited fashion in early 2001. UNRWA continued to operate its microfinance and microenterprise programme, aimed at creating job opportunities and alleviating poverty by making credit available to small businesses and micro-enterprises through revolving loan funds. UNIFEM, as part of its economic empowerment project for the development of women's entrepreneurship in the Gaza Strip, conducted a series of workshops entitled "business awareness" and "start your own business", targeting low-income and unemployed women. ILO supported vocational training through the implementation of a number of projects, including the establishment of the Sheikh Khalifa vocational rehabilitation centre and the Palestinian employment programme.

### **III. Evolution of the crisis and reorientation of United Nations efforts**

#### **A. Impact of the crisis on the economic situation**

19. The period since October 2000 is marked by the most severe and sustained crisis in Israeli-Palestinian relations since the signing of the Declaration of Principles in September 1993. Confrontations have resulted in the deaths of several hundred Palestinians, the wounding of tens of thousands of Palestinians and the deaths of over one hundred Israelis. There has also been significant damage of Palestinian infrastructure, buildings, agricultural lands and property and vehicles. In addition to unprecedented levels of confrontation, the period has been characterized by the most severe movement restrictions (also known as "closure") ever imposed on the occupied Palestinian territory by Israel. This closure seals off Palestinian towns and villages from each other, as well as from Israel. The closures have generated severe economic and humanitarian hardships. An updated report issued by UNSCO on 31 March 2001 concerning the social and economic impact of the continuing conflict and closure policy estimated the relative decline in the Palestinian gross domestic product (GDP) to be 51 per cent since the closure period. This amounts to a decline in output of over \$1,341 million during the first 185 days of the crisis. Among other things, the closure has resulted in the severe loss of employment opportunities for Palestinian workers in Israel. By the end of March, the border with Israel had been closed on 74 per cent of all working days, resulting in 13.4 million working days lost and labour income losses of over \$350.2 million. It was estimated that in March 2001, there were 297,000 unemployed workers in the occupied Palestinian territory, amounting to 26.1 per cent of the work force, and that the median monthly income of households had decreased by 48 per cent since the beginning of the crisis. At the end of 2000, the World Bank estimated that 32 per cent of the Palestinian population was living in poverty, a 50 per cent increase since the onset of the crisis, and that the poverty rate would rise to above 40 per cent by the end of 2001.

20. This collapse in living conditions has generated a corresponding collapse in public support for the peace process. The United Nations, both through the Special

Coordinator and through the United Nations agencies and programmes, has sought to respond in political and socio-economic terms both to meet the current needs and to create conditions for the resumption of Palestinian development and the peace process, leading to a just solution and economic well-being for the Palestinians.

## **B. Humanitarian Task Force for Emergency Needs**

21. In response to the outbreak of the conflict and the resulting urgent humanitarian situation, I requested the Special Coordinator to set up a Humanitarian Task Force to coordinate the response of donors and the United Nations system to emergency health needs resulting from the crisis. Chaired by UNSCO, the Humanitarian Task Force for Emergency Needs was established on 3 October 2000, in close cooperation with the Palestinian Ministry of Health. The Task Force comprises representatives from the Palestinian Authority, the United Nations system, the donor community, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and key international NGOs. Its aim was to establish coordination mechanisms for meeting the urgent health needs emerging from the crisis by identifying immediate priorities, mobilizing aid and facilitating movement and delivery of assistance. In the period October to December 2000, the Task Force helped mobilize over \$12 million in emergency assistance.

22. As the humanitarian situation continued to deteriorate, the Task Force underlined the urgency of extending assistance beyond the ongoing medical emergency to include items such as food, water and shelter to vulnerable populations, especially to those deprived of their means of livelihood. Thus, during its first several weeks of work, the Task Force helped identify key sectors requiring strategies for emergency response, including establishing priorities for additional funding. Those strategies were consequently developed and tightened through existing or ad hoc sector working groups for presentation to the wider donor community. UNSCO, as chair of the Task Force, collected information on donor contributions for emergency needs and circulated the information to all members of the international community currently providing assistance to the Palestinian people.

23. With the realization of the long-term nature of the crisis and the continuation of the external and internal closure policy imposed on the occupied Palestinian territory, it became very clear that humanitarian access, broadly meaning freedom and security of movement of people and goods required for humanitarian activities, is the central challenge in responding to the emergency. At my request, UNRWA took the lead in the Task Force's efforts to address the issue of humanitarian access. It was agreed that the Task Force would concentrate its efforts on developing and promoting the access strategies and initiatives of its various members. The objective of this reorientation was to develop concrete proposals for strengthening efforts to gain reliable and secure access to affected populations for humanitarian needs. Key elements of these efforts include enhanced monitoring of impediments to access, legal support, coordinated political interventions with authorities, media strategies and coordination of efforts to implore among key affected parties. On 20 April 2001, given the continued restrictions by Israeli authorities of humanitarian movement, the Special Coordinator and the Commissioner-General of UNRWA met the Israeli Minister for Foreign Affairs to discuss issues related to humanitarian access. The Minister assured them that it was the policy of the Government of Israel to facilitate the work of the United Nations and humanitarian workers in general.

24. At the request of UNSCO, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs became involved in the region shortly after the outbreak of the conflict. Following a needs assessment mission in October 2000, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs is supporting enhanced and strengthened capacities for planning and response to humanitarian needs through a variety of ongoing actions, including the secondment of an emergency support planner and the provision of two Humanitarian Affairs Officers to UNSCO to monitor and assess the humanitarian and socio-economic condition in specific locations.

25. The Task Force endorsed initiatives to activate key existing sector working groups to develop plans for addressing priority humanitarian needs. The key sectors identified were health, education, water and energy. In addition, ad hoc sector working groups were formed for job creation and food/social assistance, which are considered to be central areas to an effective emergency response. Sector working groups bring

together all key players needed to develop emergency strategies.

### **C. Fiscal crisis faced by the Palestinian Authority and donor response**

26. The economic impact of several months of political crisis has taken a severe toll on the fiscal health of the Palestinian Authority, dramatically reducing its capacity to offer essential goods and services and weakening Palestinian governing institutions. An estimated 50 per cent drop in GDP has translated into a 50 per cent reduction in potential tax revenue, according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other sources. This amount has been further reduced by the fact that approximately two thirds of the revenue of the Palestinian Authority is dependent upon transfer of taxes collected by the Government of Israel, as agreed under the Paris Protocol on Economic Relations of 1994, and that no revenue has been transferred since 20 December 2000.

27. In late January 2001, out of deepening concern for the social and political impact of this reduced budgetary capacity, the Special Coordinator and the other co-chairs of the Local Aid Coordination Committee (the World Bank and the Government of Norway) launched a joint initiative, in partnership with IMF, to raise awareness of and to mobilize financial support to offset the increasingly acute fiscal crisis of the Authority. To date, the donor community has responded with generosity to redress this situation. The European Union was among the first to mobilize support, through extension of a €57.5 million loan in late 2000, and a commitment to extend a further €60 million as a grant in spring 2001. High levels of bilateral support were also provided by Saudi Arabia (\$40 million), the United Arab Emirates (\$15 million) and Norway (\$10 million). Furthermore, significant assistance was pledged in early 2001 by the League of Arab States, working through the Islamic Development Bank, to extend a soft loan of \$240 million over six months to the Palestinian Authority. The combination of domestically collected revenues, donor assistance and extensions of credit has been critical in ensuring that the Palestinian Authority can continue to provide essential social services such as health care, education and social relief, as well as pay salaries for public employees. Even with such generous assistance, however, the Authority has been forced to operate on a

shoestring, given the overall decline in tax revenues and the continued lack of tax revenues that have been collected by Israel but not transferred to the Authority.

### **IV. Assessment of humanitarian assistance (September 2000-May 2001)**

28. As stated above, the priorities and needs in the occupied Palestinian territory changed abruptly with the outbreak of the crisis. Development-oriented initiatives became extremely difficult to implement in the context of violence and lack of freedom of movement while, at the same time, the immediate needs on the ground called for a rapid response. For this reason, all United Nations organizations and the specialized agencies with operating capacities to do so reacted immediately to the emergency through the implementation of humanitarian assistance programmes designed to meet the urgent requirements of the Palestinian people, who found every aspect of their lives disrupted.

#### **A. Social sectors**

29. *Education:* Many Palestinian children and youth have seen their schooling disrupted by systematic restrictions on movement imposed by Israel and are now unable to reach their schools on a regular basis. As a result, UNICEF has been supporting, through the Ministry of Education and NGOs, alternative education projects in areas under closure. UNICEF's support of a community-based education programme in Hebron, involving approximately 200 teachers, has allowed 12,000 children, whose education was disrupted due to the closure and curfew, to continue learning the Palestinian curriculum. In Khan Younis, 50 injured children, aged 10 to 15, were provided with supportive education to compensate for their absence from school in addition to psychosocial support for them and their families. UNRWA launched a flash appeal and two emergency appeals to fund its programme of assistance for refugees. With funds derived from these appeals, the Agency has been implementing a compensatory education programme for youth and children whose schooling has been suspended or disrupted due to closure. As of March 2001, 2,252 children had benefited from supplemental education courses in

English and mathematics, and an additional 480 children from computer skills courses.

30. **Health:** The current emergency situation has substantially increased demands for curative medical services and has caused a serious breakdown of preventive services, including immunization, maternal and child health care and family services. Systematic closure severely hampers the movement of patients, medical personnel and medical supplies. As a result, the sick and injured are often unable to gain access to the care to which they are entitled and there have been noticeable increases in rates of home deliveries, premature deliveries and stillbirths. The health system is facing the enormous challenge of the additional care for thousands of individuals physically and psychologically wounded during the crisis, in which access to treatment is severely curtailed by the persistent restriction on movement.

31. In response to the crisis, WHO assumed a leadership role in advocacy and coordination of health resources deployed in the territory. It set up and coordinated the field task force on health in the West Bank and prepared and launched an urgent international humanitarian appeal for assistance to the Palestinian population, requesting approximately \$7.5 million. The organization continues to carry out an ongoing assessment of the health status of the Palestinian population and has provided four traumatological kits. Upon the outbreak of the crisis, UNDP added a new dimension of emergency humanitarian assistance to its ongoing development activities. Due to its skill in rapid-response implementation of emergency projects, UNDP mobilized and disbursed funds from a variety of donor Governments, of which approximately \$1.3 million was designated for emergency support to the health sector.

32. As part of the programme of emergency humanitarian assistance, UNRWA acted quickly to meet the medical needs of the refugee community arising from the crisis. The Agency's interventions in the health sector included the establishment and deployment of mobile medical teams. By 31 March 2001, the Agency had provided 1,600 physiotherapy sessions to refugees who had sustained acute injuries in the conflict and had lent some 450 wheelchairs to mobility-impaired patients undergoing physiotherapy. UNICEF worked in several areas to improve the health-care situation under closure, concentrating on

emergency assistance, first aid and the safe delivery of newborns. It also provided logistic and technical support to the Ministry of Health for polio vaccination campaigns in remote areas of the West Bank strongly affected by the closures. This resulted in the immunization of 5,904 children under five. The second round of the campaign is currently under way. UNICEF has provided approximately 2,500 first aid kits to schools, nurseries, kindergartens and youth centres. In addition, training in first aid was carried out for teachers in 400 schools in the areas most affected by the crisis and for 396 youth in Gaza City and Rafah.

33. UNFPA's programme of assistance was rapidly adjusted to address the needs engendered by the crisis, especially in regard to reproductive health supplies and commodities. UNFPA allocated emergency funds for the procurement of reproductive health commodities, including contraceptives, essential drugs and selected equipment, as supplies had been nearly exhausted due to the closure. In addition, core budgetary resources under UNFPA's project of assistance to the Ministry of Health were made available to cover emergency requirements.

34. It is estimated that 1.3 million Palestinian children are suffering or will suffer from negative psychological effects of the continuing crisis. Mental health problems resulting from ongoing psychological distress are often long-term in particular for children. Early intervention and ongoing support is crucial in the effort to alleviate immediate effects and prevent long-term psychological problems. For this reason, UNICEF dedicated the largest share of its emergency assistance to psychosocial counselling interventions with children. These interventions covered a range of priority areas, including assistance in setting up crisis intervention teams and counselling hotlines run by expert NGOs in the West Bank and Gaza.

35. **Social welfare:** Due to the economic blockade imposed by the closure, signs of economic stress are evident everywhere in the occupied Palestinian territory, poverty rates are on the rise and families are increasingly seeking support from welfare and charitable institutions. United Nations agencies have reacted to these urgencies through various welfare projects and income-generation initiatives. In October 2000, in an emergency operation, WFP provided urgent food assistance in the Gaza Strip to 65,000 non-refugee beneficiaries from the special hardship cases category who were not included under other social welfare

programmes. In November, a second emergency operation was approved, at a cost of approximately \$3.9 million, to provide food assistance to 257,500 persons for three months. UNRWA undertook to distribute food to some 217,500 families through its relief and social services programme. Beneficiary families met a range of criteria identifying them as living below the poverty line owing to the economic crisis brought on by the closure of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. UNRWA has also extended assistance to families whose shelters have been demolished or damaged.

36. **Human rights:** While the human rights situation has always been very precarious in the occupied Palestinian territory, the recent upsurge of violence and restrictions has intensified the level and occurrence of human rights violations. From 8 to 16 November 2000, at the urgent request of the Commission on Human Rights, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights visited the occupied Palestinian territory, as well as Israel, Egypt and Jordan. Her report was issued as document E/CN.4/2001/114. On 19 October, at its fifth special session, the Commission on Human Rights adopted resolution S-5/1 establishing an international commission of inquiry to investigate violations of human rights and humanitarian law occurring after 28 September 2000 in the occupied Palestinian territory. In February 2001, a three-member inquiry commission visited the occupied Palestinian territory. The Israeli Government refused to cooperate with this commission. In March 2001, a report of the commission was submitted to the fifty-seventh session of the Commission on Human Rights (E/CN.4/2001/121).

37. Since the beginning of the current crisis, UNICEF has advocated the rights of Palestinian children at all levels. It has engaged in documenting the situation of Palestinian children and has assisted the international media in reporting accurately on this situation. A press conference was organized on 24 March 2001 to launch "Palestinian children's month", calling for the protection of all Palestinian children's rights. UNIFEM has reacted to the conflict through carrying out research, awareness-raising, capacity-building and advocacy on the impact of the current conflict on Palestinian women and children.

38. **Women:** UNIFEM efforts during the crisis have focused on building the capacity of national institutions to handle the situation and its effects. The UNIFEM

post-Beijing project facilitated the work of the emergency committees established by the general union of Palestinian women, focusing on information and media related to relief efforts, as well as advocacy and awareness campaigns. With the support of UNDP, the project is facilitating the development of emergency plans for the national women's machineries in an attempt to focus on areas of priority. In all of the above sectors, and others, UNDP has placed a total of 42 national United Nations Volunteers in order to improve the human resource capabilities of local organizations during the crisis.

## B. Productive sectors

39. As part of its emergency humanitarian programme, UNDP designated a majority proportion of funds mobilized from a variety of donor Governments for emergency employment-generation projects designed to tackle the disastrous economic consequences of income and job losses due to restrictions on worker movements. In January 2001, UNRWA established an employment-generation programme in Gaza and the West Bank to create short-term employment for refugees who lost their jobs due to the closure and economic crisis. These temporary employees are restoring essential purchasing power to their families. They are also augmenting UNRWA's emergency assistance programme. The employees include medical staff, teachers, social workers, food distribution labourers, civil engineers, and other labourers, all of whom are collectively engaged in building tangible assets for the benefit of the community. These assets include expansion and repair of refugee camp infrastructure and renovation of agency schools and health clinics.

40. In the area of agriculture, in 2001, WFP began implementing a quick action project to support agricultural development activities with the Ministry of Agriculture and local and international NGOs as partners. This project involves rehabilitating existing terraces, building new terraces, improving soil quality and constructing cisterns. The project also serves to involve women in training activities, by providing food aid as an incentive. Approximately 3,700 poor farmers and 2,200 women are targeted by the project during its one-year duration at a cost of approximately \$2.7 million.

41. ILO established a task force to prepare project proposals in response to the current crisis. In March 2001, a mission was undertaken to assess priority needs. Partners endorsed proposals concerning employment creation and income generation, vocational rehabilitation of disabled persons, vocational training and capacity-building of social partners in response to the crisis. ILO is in the process of launching, with its own resources, some of these activities and is seeking extrabudgetary resources in order to consolidate its actions.

42. As of October 2000, UNIDO's overall implementation plan was revised to cope with the crisis. The remote support by UNIDO staff and experts was increased as compared with fieldwork. As the demand for upgrading Palestinian enterprises is very high even under the present circumstances, it was decided to continue capacity-building activities by holding training courses originally planned for the West Bank and Gaza in other locations. These courses, organized for industrialists, staff of the Ministry of Industry and the Federation of Palestinian Industries, technical experts and private consultancy companies, have been or will be held in Bahrain, Jordan and Egypt.

## V. Unmet needs and proposals for effective response

43. By virtue of its long-term presence on the ground, the United Nations system has been able, in collaboration with local authorities and communities, to identify priorities for future action in the occupied Palestinian territory. The underlying approach aims at the adoption of a two-track strategy. On the one hand, it responds to the emergency needs and priorities posed by the current crisis and, on the other, it aims at the continuation of a development-oriented approach that could be put into place if the current crisis is resolved or, where possible, implemented concurrently in order to prevent a further erosion of previous developmental achievements. UNDP provides a broad overview of intersectoral priority needs, identified in terms of several sectors in which short-term assistance can alleviate the immense hardships with which the Palestinian people are currently faced, until long-term solutions are found. According to UNDP, the areas of the highest priority for emergency assistance in the West Bank and Gaza are employment generation, support to the health sector, restoration of municipal

and social infrastructure and agricultural restoration and rehabilitation.

### A. Human resources and social development

44. **Education:** UNICEF has identified a range of priority needs of children and is currently seeking to expand the services put into place in response to the crisis. Due to the fact that there are still at least 37 schools in the occupied Palestinian territory that have not re-opened since September and that more schools may be in a similar situation depending on the day-to-day evolution of the situation UNICEF considers the development of educational alternatives to be a priority need. In order to respond to this need, it seeks to build upon its existing project in Hebron, as well as including the development of self-learning packets; development of radio and television support programmes; set up of learning centres and other related activities. In schools that are operating, the priority is to make the schools a more protective environment through further training of teachers in psychosocial interventions, first aid and evacuation and self-help and life-skills. UNESCO has highlighted from the bombardment of various schools and institutions, including the Khadury Technical College in Tulkarem, has caused damage amounting to millions of dollars. In addition, the organization draws attention to the major disruptions at universities largely owing to high teacher and student absenteeism caused by restrictions on the movement of persons.

45. **Health:** UNFPA emphasizes the fact that the emergency provision of health supplies is not sufficient to cover the needs of the Palestinian population, especially as regards access to care. UNFPA, in collaboration with WHO, has launched an emergency appeal to cover three areas to be addressed within the framework of the UNFPA emergency assistance. The first is the need to develop a logistics system for reproductive health supplies and other commodities. Secondly, there has been an increase in obstetric complications and possible maternal mortality and morbidity as a result of the closure and siege on towns and cities. Thirdly, UNFPA recommends that a large-scale survey of the impact of the closure on reproductive health be carried out. WHO puts forward a range of priority needs in the health system which should be implemented immediately owing to the

prevailing emergency conditions. These include the continuous assessment of the health situation and the response capacity and access to health facilities by both patients and health workers as a public health priority. UNICEF stresses the necessity of the provision of emergency health supplies and equipment for the primary health care system. This would provide crucial support to the strategy of the Ministry of Health, which involves strengthening the primary health-care level so that additional emergency interventions can be performed in areas affected by closures that prevent the population from reaching hospitals. UNICEF also emphasizes the importance of the development of mid-term and long-term psychosocial interventions, given the situation of chronic stress and widespread psychological vulnerabilities.

## B. Social welfare

46. WFP points to a variety of urgent issues in provision of food aid. The very weak response of donors to the WFP emergency appeal considerably delayed the procurement and delivery of commodities for their second emergency operation. Until April 2001, only 50 per cent of the resources needed to implement this operation had been confirmed. Similar difficulties arose in implementation of WFP's long-term food aid project. Due to resource constraints, a break in distribution occurred from June to September 2000. The subsequent arrival of WFP food allowed distributions to resume in October 2000. However, only 71 per cent of the resources needed to implement this project was covered by donors. WFP emphasizes the fact that delays in the supply of food to the Palestinian population could lead to deterioration in the health and nutrition status of the vulnerable groups and the at-risk categories. A prolongation of the crisis may result in a continued demand for emergency assistance to the current target groups, with the likelihood that their number could well increase. The continuing crisis and closure have significantly hampered the movement of goods, which, coupled with additional security measures, have complicated the logistics arrangements for commodity distributions and increased logistics costs.

47. *Human rights/women*: UNIFEM, echoes the priority needs indicated by the national women's structures. Of primary importance is the need to ensure that the humanitarian assistance that is being offered is

gender-sensitive and takes into account the situation and needs of women. Before the crisis, 73 per cent of female-headed households suffered from deep poverty. Since the crisis, preliminary analyses show that the number of Palestinian households in deep poverty has increased, with an even sharper increase for those households maintained by women. There is, therefore, an urgent need for strategies and interventions that address the feminization of poverty. UNIFEM points to the need for further research on the impact of the current crisis on women and children and on raising women's involvement in peace-building.

48. *Youth*: UNICEF is striving to continue to provide peaceful opportunities for the youth given that, for a variety of reasons, adolescents aged 12 to 18 years often bear the brunt of the present crisis. The organization of summer activities will be a key strategy to provide safe recreational and non-formal activities for Palestinian youth. UNICEF supported the adoption of a Palestinian declaration on summer camps on 30 April 2001. Availability of funding will be crucial to expand the number of such activities this summer. The United Nations Volunteers programme stresses the need, in all of the above sectors, for an enabling mechanism to facilitate the utilization of volunteer skills and ethos in the current crisis situation. The programme thus advocates the adoption of a strategic intervention to further support and encourage the spirit of volunteerism.

## C. Productive sectors

49. As indicated above, ILO carried out a mission in March 2001 to assess priority needs and the relevance of ILO project proposals which had been prepared in response to the current crisis. The following priority areas were identified: employment creation and income generation through a multi-component support programme at the community level; vocational rehabilitation of disabled persons and youth with special needs; vocation training; combating child labour; employment mapping and capacity-building of local partners in response to the crisis. The organization is currently seeking the funds necessary for the implementation of projects in those areas. UNIDO stresses the fact that the current situation has dramatically affected the industrial sector. At present, the industrial sector is able to produce between 10 per cent and 20 per cent of its average output, which is



having a striking effect on the Palestinian economy. The main factors affecting industry include: lack of availability of raw material and industrial inputs; no possibility to export; no sub-contracting arrangements; sporadic or unavailable electric power; limited or no transportation or movement of goods and workers; breakdown of opportunities for investment and partnerships; no possibility for attracting funds and technical cooperation; and physical destruction of industrial assets and infrastructure. All of these areas should be addressed urgently. Furthermore, Palestinian representatives of the public and private sectors expressed the need for continuing UNIDO support in several areas falling under various categories of industrial upgrading and investment promotion. UNCTAD calls attention to the urgent needs that have been created in the trade sector by the economic crisis. In response to a request of the Minister of Economy and Trade of the Palestinian Authority, UNCTAD initiated a joint effort with the World Trade Organization (WTO) to respond to pressing technical assistance needs posed by the crisis. An appeal has already been launched to a number of bilateral and multilateral donors to contribute to implementation of a package of urgent technical assistance to enhance Palestinian regional integration and cooperation and assist the Palestinian external trade sector in addressing new policy challenges.

## **VI. Conclusions**

50. In view of the ongoing crisis in Israeli-Palestinian relations, the period under review has been the most difficult and challenging since the United Nations began intensive development assistance to the occupied Palestinian territory in 1993. In fact, the previous achievements of facilitating international aid to the Palestinian people have been seriously threatened. At the same time, the sudden outbreak of the crisis has tested the ability of the United Nations system to respond appropriately and effectively to urgent priority humanitarian needs. A United Nations emergency coordination mechanism, the Humanitarian Task Force for Emergency Needs, was established within days of the outbreak of the conflict. This Task Force, initially envisaged to focus on health needs, was extended to address other priority sectors as soon as the need became evident. Emergency assistance received has greatly contributed to meeting some of the immediate requirements. However, much work needs to be done to

reduce and repair the extensive negative effects of the crisis on the Palestinian economy and society.

51. In my diplomatic efforts, and through those of the Special Coordinator, I continue to press for a resumption of the peace process on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), and to stress the importance of an immediate effort to restore viability to the Palestinian economy and institutions. I have argued that it is not possible to restore security and stability without a resumption of political activity leading towards a just settlement and of economic activity leading to an improvement of living conditions. A first step in this regard is the full implementation of the report of the Fact Finding Committee established under the auspices of the United States President and in coordination with myself at the Sharm el Sheikh Summit in October 2000.

52. What seemed initially to be a short-term emergency, warranting limited humanitarian aid, has developed into a protracted conflict necessitating more sustained United Nations action that continues to address emergency needs while at the same time sowing the seeds for future development. By continuing to respond to the ever-changing crisis situation and simultaneously aiming to ensure that previous developmental gains are not eroded and are furthered wherever possible, the United Nations is endeavouring to meet the needs in the occupied Palestinian territory in the most comprehensive manner possible. It will be necessary for the United Nations system to strengthen and fine-tune existing coordination mechanisms, to eliminate potential duplication and to ensure responsiveness to needs identified by the beneficiaries.

53. The various United Nations organizations and the specialized agencies must continue to reconfigure their work so as to strike the optimal balance between relief and development. It is clear that there is a heightened need for increased activities and services provided by the United Nations and other organizations in the occupied Palestinian territory. I call upon the international community to provide the necessary resources for the assistance programmes for the Palestinian people. I would draw particular attention to the latest emergency appeal from UNRWA, which provides vital services to hundreds of thousands of Palestinians.

54. The dramatic deterioration of the economic and the humanitarian situation in the occupied Palestinian territory highlights the urgent need to find a peaceful solution of the ongoing crisis. I, therefore, strongly urge the parties to end the current cycle of violence and to resume a meaningful political process on the basis of United Nations resolutions, leading to lasting peace and reconciliation.

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Item 21 (c) of the preliminary list\*

**Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: assistance to the Palestinian people**

## Economic and Social Council Substantive session of 2002

Agenda item 9

**Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations**

## Assistance to the Palestinian people

### Report of the Secretary-General\*\*

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\* A/57/50/Rev.1.

\*\* The present report is being submitted on 5 July 2002 in order to include as much updated information as possible.

## *Summary*

The present report describes measures taken by United Nations agencies and the donor community at large to render assistance to the Palestinian people in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 56/111. During the reporting period, the realities and priorities in the occupied Palestinian territory shifted significantly owing to the rapid escalation of violence and confrontation in March-April 2002, leading to extensive destruction of Palestinian social and economic infrastructure and a sharp deterioration in the living conditions of the Palestinian people. This new situation required rapid adjustments in the international assistance to the Palestinian people. To reflect this shift in emphasis, the report contains a separate analysis of the assistance provided in the periods from June 2001 to March 2002 and from March to May 2002.

The international community is responding to the crisis facing both the Palestinian Authority and the civilian population with a two-track approach: continuation of efforts to support the Palestinian Authority's capacity to deliver essential services; and emergency assistance with regard to damage to institutions, infrastructure and property, and in the area of urgent social and humanitarian needs. Using the Local Aid Coordination Committee as its principal forum, donors and United Nations agencies, supported by its co-chairs (Norway, the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories and the World Bank), launched a joint emergency response to the crisis based on immediate humanitarian assistance and repairs, as well as on damage assessment and rehabilitation of infrastructure and institutions.

The present report also describes the challenges faced by the United Nations system and the international community in providing short, medium and long-term assistance to the Palestinian people.

The consequences of Israel's policy of internal and external closures have been devastating, and since April 2002 these closures have been tightened further. The closures are increasing the cost and complexity of the efforts of donors and the United Nations to strengthen Palestinian institutions, and to support the provision of basic services to an increasingly impoverished population.

## **I. Introduction**

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 56/111 of 14 December 2001 on assistance to the Palestinian people, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to it at its fifty-seventh session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the resolution. The present report covers the period from June 2001 to May 2002.

2. It should be noted that information concerning the living conditions of the Palestinian people are provided in separate, periodic reports prepared by the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories (UNSCO). In addition, a separate report, prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan (A/57/63-E/2002/21) provides detailed information on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, including the current crisis situation. The annual report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) provides information, inter alia, on the socio-economic conditions of the registered refugee population in the occupied Palestinian territory.

3. In September 1999, the Secretary-General reconfigured the mandate of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories, whose title was changed to "United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority". In addition to his responsibilities relating to the occupied Palestinian territory, the Special Coordinator was given responsibilities for coordinating United Nations assistance related to the peace process in Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic. Throughout the period under review, the Special Coordinator has maintained his efforts to fulfil the mandate of his office, including ensuring effective coordination between the relevant institutions of the Palestinian Authority, the United Nations and the international community, as well as documenting the economic and social conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory. He has also provided periodic

analyses on those matters and special reports on specific issues.

## **II. Overall context**

### **A. Situation on the ground**

4. Since the outbreak of the crisis in September 2000, the situation on the ground has deteriorated consistently. In the last year, there were increasing numbers of suicide attacks against civilian and military Israeli targets by Palestinian groups and large-scale military operations by Israeli armed forces, including incursions into Palestinian-controlled areas. Following a particularly lethal terrorist attack in Netanya on 27 March, the conflict entered a new phase with the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) launching a massive retaliatory operation in the West Bank. The Palestinian civilian infrastructure was severely damaged, including road, water, electricity, telecommunication and sewage networks. The Palestinian Authority's capacity to provide services for the Palestinian population was decisively weakened. Private institutions and property also suffered widespread damage. Upon withdrawing, Israeli forces redeployed around Palestinian cities and maintained a security cordon around all major population centres. As of May 2002, Israeli forces continued to make short and targeted incursions into the A areas of the West Bank.

5. The donor, diplomatic and aid community, deeply concerned about the humanitarian situation in the occupied Palestinian territory and the terrorist attacks against Israel and Israel's military retaliation, repeatedly urged the Government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority to abide by their obligations under international humanitarian law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention. This means, inter alia, preventing attacks against civilians, including suicide attacks; ensuring the safety of civilians; allowing medical personnel immediate, safe and unhindered access to the sick and the wounded; lifting curfews within Palestinian cities and permitting the entry of food and medical supplies; avoiding damage to civilian infrastructure; and ensuring that diplomatic missions, United Nations agencies, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and other relief actors have immediate, safe and unhindered access to the population in need.

## **B. Economic crisis**

6. Prior to the March-April 2002 military operations, the economic and social conditions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip were already in a state of deep and continuously worsening crisis. Relative to the pre-intifada period, the first 18 months of confrontations and movement restrictions had witnessed a reduction of more than 20 per cent in domestic production levels, unprecedented levels of unemployment, a 30 per cent decline in per capita income and a more than doubling of the poverty rate to reach some 45-50 per cent of the Palestinian population. The World Bank estimates that the physical damage inflicted on the Palestinian public infrastructure and private property had already reached \$305 million by end-year 2001, while Palestinian income losses totalled \$2.4 billion at that time.

7. Increasingly intense confrontations, Israeli incursions and an ever tighter closure regime resulted in further deterioration of the economic conditions in both the West Bank and Gaza Strip, as well as in Israel. In particular, the movement of people and goods in the West Bank has become increasingly restricted, further impeding domestic production and the circulation of goods and services. These closure measures led to a further decrease in Palestinian labour flows to Israel. Private investment and external trade were also further compressed. Donor-supported projects — whether in public infrastructure or capacity- or institution-building — were increasingly damaged, undermined or halted owing to the confrontations and the inability of personnel to move within the West Bank and Gaza. That was reflected in a precipitous decline in public investment, most of which was funded by donors.

8. In this respect, particularly worrying is the impact of the new system of permits for Palestinians to be able to travel within the West Bank and the implementation of the so-called “back-to-back” system whereby goods need to be off-loaded from incoming trucks and then re-loaded onto local trucks at eight checkpoint locations near major Palestinian cities in the West Bank. These measures will reduce even further Palestinian economic activity. Domestic employment, as a result, will contract, causing deterioration in the already precarious labour market and in Palestinian living conditions. Moreover, it is expected, as evidenced in Gaza, that the impact of creating enclosed “cantons” and enforcing a system of travel by permit

will drastically reduce the number of Palestinians working in Israel. If the remaining number of Palestinians who hold Palestinian identity cards and are employed in Israel were to become unemployed, then, at existing rates, UNSCO estimates that the Palestinian unemployment rate would increase by nearly four percentage points. Consequently, it is estimated that the poverty rate for the West Bank and Gaza will soon surpass 60 per cent. Finally, the Palestinian Authority and municipal administrations will experience a deterioration in fiscal positions, reducing the quality of social services provided by the Authority for the population, whether in the health, education or environmental sector. As the socio-economic underpinnings of their society disintegrate, it will be harder for Palestinians to cope in conditions of rising poverty.

9. Both UNSCO and the World Bank have repeatedly noted that the single most important direct cause of the socio-economic crisis is the internal and external closures imposed by Israeli authorities on the Palestinian population. Indeed, economic losses due to closures are far greater than the costs incurred by the damage to infrastructure and institutions, even after the March/April military incursions and their aftermath. As an illustration, during the first 15 months of the current crisis, physical damage from armed conflict amounted to \$305 million while Palestinian income losses due principally to the restrictions on the movement of goods and people totalled \$2.4 billion. The most efficient way to relieve this socio-economic crisis would thus be to significantly ease movement restrictions on people, vehicles and goods. This would produce immediate and significant benefits, reversing the downward spiral towards a geographically fragmented economy, raising output, employment and income, increasing economic growth rates and reducing the poverty rate. Recognizing that Israel has legitimate security concerns, the international community has sought to engage the Government of Israel in a dialogue on ways of maintaining security while increasing the movement of Palestinian goods and people, to date with limited success.

## **C. Fiscal crisis within the Palestinian Authority**

10. The fiscal situation and prospects of the Palestinian Authority have worsened severely since the outset of the crisis in 2000. The adverse effects on its

fiscal position are due to: (a) a sharp decline in its revenue-making capacity associated with a decline in economic activity and a disruption in tax administration (it is estimated that the Palestinian Authority's revenue-making capacity has dropped to about 60 per cent of its pre-crisis level); (b) the suspension by the Government of Israel of the transfer of the revenues it collects on behalf of the Palestinian Authority ("clearance revenues"); and (c) an increase in expenditure associated with the emergency needs arising from the crisis. Despite adjustment measures by the Palestinian Authority, implemented in the context of an emergency spending plan developed with the assistance of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), a large fiscal deficit emerged in 2001. That was largely financed through external assistance, in addition to the accumulation of domestic arrears with the private sector.

### **III. International response and assistance provided by the United Nations system**

11. With the outbreak of the conflict in September 2000, the donor community and United Nations agencies operating in the occupied Palestinian territory had to rapidly adapt their activities and assistance to reflect the growing crisis on the ground. That led to a shift from a focus on long-standing development activities to a concentration on emergency humanitarian assistance. United Nations agencies thus began to rely on a two-track strategy so as to meet emergency needs, while at the same time maintaining their regular programmes.

12. During the reporting period, there was a strengthening of collaborative efforts among donors, the United Nations and the aid community at large to respond to the socio-economic and humanitarian consequences of the crisis and closures. From the outset of the April 2002 crisis, they were actively engaged in humanitarian and emergency response. The most remarkable feature of this response was the high degree of collaboration between donors, the Palestinian Authority and the United Nations system. The United Nations Special Coordinator worked towards fulfilling the mandate of his office by continuing diplomatic efforts based on the three-tier approach to address the security, political and economic dimensions of the crisis, and in the economic arena led concerted efforts, together with the Palestinian Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, to reorganize and revitalize sector working groups in priority areas.

13. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has been involved in the region at the request of UNSCO since September 2000 to support its activities in coordinating the international response and facilitating the work of the humanitarian agencies, particularly the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). On 27 June 2001, UNSCO convened the Seventh Annual Inter-agency meeting, in which 23 United Nations agencies, together with their Palestinian and donor counterparts, discussed both the role of the international community in responding to the priority needs and the way it can best promote medium- and long-term development in the West Bank and Gaza.

14. By mid-2001, the donor community had agreed on the need for a better understanding of the economic impact of the crisis and its accompanying closure policy, and the priorities that they should collectively address. Under the auspices of the local aid coordination committee, the World Bank conducted in March 2002 an economic assessment, presenting a comprehensive and sobering picture of the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory and outlining a course of action for the coming period. In addition, the donor support group of the local aid coordination committee conducted in April and May 2002 an assessment of physical and institutional damage resulting from IDF actions in the West Bank.

15. Donor funding increased dramatically between the outbreak of the current crisis and the first quarter of 2002. According to the World Bank, compared with 1999, commitments rose by 77 per cent and disbursements by 93 per cent in 2001. However, the surge in assistance can be misleading, as disbursements on growth-oriented infrastructure and capacity-building projects dropped from over \$400 million in 1999 to \$175 million in 2001, and many large capital projects (highways, industrial estates, the Gaza port and airport, for example) were seriously delayed, totally halted, damaged or destroyed. Thus, long-term investment was sacrificed for short-term survival.

16. As far as budgetary support for the Palestinian Authority is concerned, it was provided mainly by the League of Arab States (\$460 million) and the European Union (\$114 million) for the period from November 2000 to November 2001. In addition, donors contributed to the financing of non-wage budget expenditures to ensure service delivery by the Palestinian Authority, under the Emergency Service Support Programme sponsored by the World Bank. In

February 2002, the Palestinian Authority's emergency spending plan was extended. However, as of May 2002, a sharper reduction in revenue, combined with higher emergency expenditures, seemed to be leading to an increase in the fiscal gap for 2002. Commitments for 2002 amounted to \$620 million from the League of Arab States, \$110 million from the European Union and \$10 million from Norway. Donors have also been urging Israel to release tax revenues which, for the period from December 2000 to December 2001, were estimated at 2.1 billion Israeli shekels (US\$ 507 million) and have offered to create mechanisms to monitor the use of those funds. However, as of May 2002, these transfers had not been resumed.

**A. June 2001 to March 2002:  
United Nations emergency and  
development assistance**

17. Both development and humanitarian assistance activities for the period prior to the April 2002 events are briefly outlined below by sectors as categorized by the Palestinian Authority in its Palestinian Development Plan.

18. *Infrastructure and natural resource management.* United Nations agencies were involved in various water and sanitation projects (UNRWA) or in infrastructural development at the municipal and national levels (World Bank; United Nations Development Programme). They continued to assist in enhancing the administrative and managerial capacities of Palestinian institutions and ministries that play crucial public service roles. To cite but one example, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has disbursed approximately \$1 million since May 2001 for development assistance in the areas of reproductive health, population and development strategies. Overall, emphasis in the reporting period was placed on (a) training; (b) improved access to information and communication technologies; (c) capacity-building for various ministries of the Palestinian Authority; and (d) the promotion of transparency and accountability.

19. *Human resources and social development.* Education remained one of the key sectors of United Nations activities in the West Bank and Gaza. UNRWA, for example, devoted a cash expenditure of \$77.4 million to that sector. However, the tight closure regime and the intensity of the crisis had a particularly

devastating impact on the well-being of Palestinian children and their ability to maintain pre-crisis levels of academic performance. Mobility restrictions and in some cases injuries, regularly prevented children from physically attending classes. UNRWA, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) all conducted or financially supported remedial "catch-up" classes, various compensatory education programmes, and extra-curricular activities. In addition to supplying equipment and teaching materials, the three agencies also devoted various programmes to teacher training, training workshops for youth and transfer-of-knowledge schemes. UNICEF also worked towards better parenting practices, the introduction of life skills into school curricula, the strengthening of education information systems and school health screening. In addition, UNDP and UNESCO jointly launched a project for the improvement of the quality of Palestinian early childhood education.

20. The emergency situation significantly increased the burden placed on the Ministry of Health and United Nations agencies' curative services, as highlighted in the vulnerability assessment by the World Health Organization (WHO) of the impact of the situation on the health status of the Palestinian population. Agencies responded by stepping up their emergency activities. UNRWA, which operates 51 primary health-care facilities throughout the West Bank and Gaza which had 3.3 million patient visits in 2001 (a 21 per cent increase in medical consultations), devoted \$23 million to its overall health programme. United Nations emergency assistance involved strengthening the capacity of the health system with regard to emergency and casualty care, the provision of mobile medical teams, the distribution of aid kits, and increasingly specialized and skilled training. Agencies also devoted many of their activities to mental health and psychological support, especially for children, youth and those who have sustained physically disabling injuries. WHO, for example, carried out an assessment of mental health services in the West Bank and Gaza with a view to assisting the Ministry of Health in the development and formulation of national mental health policies. UNICEF produced a psychological aid brochure for use by teachers and parents and established crisis intervention teams to provide psychosocial support for children through recreational activities and self-expression.



21. As the socio-economic and humanitarian crisis deepened, poverty alleviation became an increasingly important area of intervention. United Nations agencies focused on three main mechanisms: cash flow initiatives, food distribution and employment generation programmes. The cash expenditure in 2001 for the entire relief and social services programmes amounted to \$8 million. Food distribution increased significantly over the reporting period, targeting both the refugee population (UNRWA) and the non-refugee population (World Food Programme). In July 2001, WFP approved a new emergency operation to provide food assistance for a total of 53,500 households and continued the ongoing operation begun in October 2000 to assist 104,000 special hardship cases. As for employment generation programmes, UNRWA expanded the number of short-term employment opportunities, with an emphasis on the Gaza Strip. Between early 2001 and April 2002, over 140,000 individuals benefited from short-term jobs with UNRWA.

22. *Human rights and women.* Both the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and UNICEF focused on human rights advocacy, training and education and the establishment of guidelines and codes of conduct for specific Palestinian Authority security services and ministries. United Nations programmes did not only support civil society and grass-roots initiatives for the promotion and protection of human and children's rights. They also targeted specific groups, such as prison guards, the police forces and members of the Palestinian Legislative Council, and they worked with the Palestinian Authority at improving its legal framework. Seeking to address the particular needs and rights of women, UNRWA sponsored 25 women's programme centres, and UNIFEM continued the implementation of several programmes and projects.

23. *Productive sectors.* UNRWA's microfinance and microenterprise programme remained one of the few credit intermediaries continuing to finance the microenterprise sector. However, as a commercial venture that covers its costs from the interest it charges on loans, the programme was subject to the same pressures facing the Palestinian business community as a whole, and in 2001, for the first time since 1997, the programme did not cover its full costs. In the area of environmental conservation and rural development, UNDP led many initiatives in such diverse fields as improving energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse

gas emissions, establishing a nature reserve in Gaza and increasing the capacity of the poorest to sustain their livelihoods by providing food security through water harvesting and rehabilitation of rangelands. In the same area, WFP began a quick action project in January 2001 as initial development assistance to 47,360 small farmers, landless peasants and rural women. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) worked on three main projects: (a) support for small and medium-sized enterprise development; (b) strengthening technical capacities in customs administration; and (c) strengthening capacities in debt monitoring and financial analysis. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) continued its support for the Palestinian Federation of Industry by providing assistance for local small and medium-sized enterprises. Despite having to curtail many of its planned activities, the International Labour Organization (ILO) continued its Palestinian Employment Programme and followed up several training and research projects related to vocational and trade union activities, the private sector and child labour.

## **B. March to May 2002: United Nations focus on emergency assistance**

24. The urgency created by the events of March/April 2002 led the international community to mobilize rapidly to assist the Palestinian people and the Palestinian Authority to cope with the humanitarian impact of the Israeli military incursions, as well as with the physical damage caused by them. Doing so required strong coordination among the donor and aid community at large and close cooperation with the Palestinian Authority. Using the Local Aid Coordination Committee as its principal forum, donors and United Nations agencies, supported by its co-chairs (Norway, UNSCO and the World Bank) launched a highly coordinated joint emergency response to the crisis based on two approaches: first, immediate humanitarian assistance and repairs (priority one); and, second, damage assessment and rehabilitation of infrastructure and institutions (priority two). The purpose of the priority one mechanism was to help the Palestinian Authority, the municipalities and non-governmental organizations to cope with humanitarian and basic repair needs by routing specific emergency requests to donors and by encouraging donors to focus on the needs coming through a clearing house coordinated jointly by UNDP and the World Bank.

25. *Medical supplies, health care and trauma counselling.* Despite the extremely dangerous conditions on the ground, throughout the month of April, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNRWA and WHO all made regular deliveries of medical supplies to hospitals in the major cities of the West Bank and supported vaccination campaigns and other emergency measures throughout the territory. WHO established the health action response team operation room in order to support and strengthen the structure and coordination mechanisms of the health care group and the sector working groups. During the Israeli incursion in the Jenin refugee camp, UNRWA mobilized immediately to mount a relief operation to assist those who fled the camp in the early stages of the fighting. Once the Agency gained temporary access to the camp, a vaccination campaign was carried out for residents to prevent tetanus and other infectious diseases due to decomposition of corpses and the risk of contaminated water. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs deployed additional staff, including a United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination team to assist UNRWA in assessing/managing the Jenin refugee camp crisis.

26. United Nations agencies placed much emphasis on psychological support. UNICEF took the lead and set up counselling hot lines which are fully functional in Ramallah, Nablus and Gaza. Front-line psychosocial workers are being trained to conduct activities and respond to case referrals. UNICEF has also, in cooperation with UNRWA and Palestinian non-governmental organizations, developed a plan of action for short and mid-term psychosocial interventions in Jenin. The approach, which is in line with the Palestinian Code of Conduct for Psychosocial Interventions, will be replicated in eight sites in the West Bank. In addition, teachers will also receive psychosocial support to help them cope with ongoing traumatic events.

27. *Food and shelter.* Intermittent curfews and the curtailment of economic activity have led to a greatly increased need for food and nutritional support. As an intermediate response to the intensification of the crisis in March and April, and despite the extreme movement restrictions, UNRWA, WFP and UNICEF distributed emergency food supplies. A food crisis group chaired by WFP was established with membership from concerned United Nations agencies, national and international non-governmental organization consortiums, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and donors. WFP also

prepared a new emergency operation to cover the increased needs in the occupied Palestinian territory arising from the current situation, to cover the period from May to December 2002. Funds are currently being sought for this project. Damage caused to shelters during incursions has also generated a need for an expansion of activities in this sector. During the military incursion in Jenin, UNRWA provided 120 tents, 100 kitchen kits and 2,460 blankets to those individuals who had fled the fighting. Once the Agency had gained access to the camp, its engineers shored up 56 structures to prevent them from collapsing. In all, 85 structures (255 housing units) were designated for reinforcement in this way. At the same time, the Agency began the demolition of unsafe structures in the camp.

28. *Water and sanitation.* Following damage to the civilian infrastructure in the West Bank as a result of Israeli incursions, UNDP, UNRWA and other United Nations agencies undertook intensive efforts to restore water, sewage and electricity connections in populated areas. The emergency repair of roads was also a top priority.

29. *Damage assessment.* The aim of the priority two mechanism was also to avoid overloading weakened Palestinian institutions, to minimize duplication and gaps in assistance and to avoid overenthusiastic reprogramming of development assistance into emergency work. The donor community agreed that those tasks could best be accomplished by working from one agreed inventory of the damage directly caused by Israeli incursions since 1 March 2002. A physical and institutional damage assessment was thus launched on a regional basis under the auspices of the newly created Donor Support Group consisting of Palestinian Authority officials and staff members of the European Commission, UNDP, UNSCO, the United States Agency for International Development and the World Bank working under the aegis of the Local Aid Coordination Committee. Seven regions of the West Bank were defined for this purpose, with a further five "standby" regions designated in the event of further incursions. Regional Teams throughout the cities of the West Bank were formed and a lead donor and/or United Nations agency for each region was assigned to review damage to the infrastructure and public institutions and develop a list of agreed action priorities.

30. The damage assessment was completed in mid-May, and estimated the total physical and institutional damage in the West Bank resulting from Israel's

military incursions during March and April at \$342 million. On a sectoral basis, the private sector suffered the most damage, with repairs estimated at \$100 million. The city of Nablus (and its historical sites) was hardest hit (\$113 million), followed by the Jenin and Ramallah governorates. There was also significant damage to several Palestinian Authority ministries, roads, private housing and ancient cultural sites, as well as to electricity and water networks, schools and clinics. The refugee population was also particularly hit.

31. These figures do not include income losses and social and humanitarian costs — a separate United Nations assessment was launched in May under the auspices of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to assess humanitarian damage. During the damage assessment exercise, the Support Group also had the responsibility to solicit information from donors on their planned funding for damage repair and to obtain an indicative sense of donor funding preference by sector and area.

32. On 25 April 2002, an informal meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of International Assistance to Palestinians was held in Oslo in which Israel and the Palestinian Authority participated as guests. Out of the estimated \$2 billion needed, which included \$342 million for the repair of the physical damage of March/April, \$1.2 billion was pledged. The meeting was set in the context of the three-pronged strategic framework outlined by United States Secretary of State Colin Powell, building on the Quartet's joint statement. Donors agreed to review whether some of the funds could be made available for immediate needs and to review the possibility of making new funds available. Donors reaffirmed their commitment to restoring the capacity of the Palestinian Authority at the national and municipal levels to deliver basic services and provide law and order. They also agreed to work to recreate the conditions of normal economic life and to support private sector recovery. Israel's cooperation in easing closures and facilitating and safeguarding the work of the donor community were seen as central to those objectives.

#### **IV. Challenges for United Nations assistance**

33. The upsurge in violence in March and April 2002 exacerbated a series of challenges that United Nations agencies and the donor community were already facing

in their efforts to provide assistance for the Palestinian people.

##### **A. Movement restrictions and humanitarian access issues**

34. While closure measures by the Israeli authorities have had a significant effect on the daily lives of Palestinian families, they have furthermore become a significant hindrance for all United Nations agencies and the donor community at large attempting to implement their various development and humanitarian assistance activities. Specifically, the logistics of United Nations agencies were heavily affected: the multitude of checkpoints, the imposition of curfews and internal closures and the introduction of a cumbersome permit and magnetic card system for the travel of national staff have caused long delays and unpleasant and lengthy travels for both international and national staff, increased costs, and resulted often in an inability among the national staff of United Nations agencies to report to work. At the peak of the latest crisis, for instance, in late March and April, Gaza was divided into three areas, seriously disrupting humanitarian services and preventing nearly 800 local UNRWA staff members from reporting to work. In addition, closures and curfews often prevented beneficiaries from reaching distribution/services sites, or forced them to take long routes to reach their destinations, thereby seriously undermining the ability of United Nations agencies to fulfil their mandates to provide assistance and relief for the Palestinian people. For instance, the monitoring of food distributions and beneficiaries has become increasingly difficult for WFP staff, as has the timely implementation of various WFP-related activities. Closures obviously also affected the ability of the Palestinian counterparts of United Nations agencies to move and work, resulting in weaker communication and coordination between the project partners and the agencies. Moreover, numerous United Nations facilities and the premises of institutions funded by United Nations agencies were damaged by Israeli shelling or the IDF occupation of the premises, which were turned into barracks or detention centres by the IDF, for example UNRWA and UNESCO schools and educational facilities.

35. In the past several months, access restrictions have reached an unprecedented level, making the emergency humanitarian assistance operations of the

various United Nations agencies extremely difficult and often dangerous. United Nations aid convoys and medical teams, including ambulances, were repeatedly denied entry or seriously delayed while attempting to enter various areas of the West Bank and in large areas of the Gaza Strip. Compounding those movement restrictions, UNRWA convoys and ambulances have been fired upon by Israeli troops, UNRWA and UNSCO staff members have been arrested by the Israeli authorities and detained without charge, and one UNRWA staff member, assisting a medical crew, was shot and killed while riding in an UNRWA ambulance on 7 March near Tulkarem. In Gaza, the Karni crossing has been closed to its containerized cargoes since 29 March. As of 13 May, UNRWA had some 348 containers stuck in the Port of Ashdod, destined for Gaza, which were not allowed in.

36. UNRWA and UNSCO have been working on a continuing basis through various channels to improve humanitarian access. Within the donor community's technical task force on project implementation, UNSCO has led United Nations efforts to negotiate with Israel on improved access. UNRWA and UNSCO intervened frequently with the Israeli authorities on the ground, but the situation over the last year not only did not improve but dramatically deteriorated. As of the end of May 2002, the Israeli authorities continued imposing restrictions on the travel of United Nations personnel, vehicles and goods through key crossing points, as well as intrusive search and inspection procedures of United Nations vehicles and personnel — including diplomats — at those crossing points. More worryingly, at the beginning of May 2002, a new Israeli plan for an even further tightening of the closure of Palestinian cities and villages was disclosed to the international community. According to Israeli authorities, the plan includes the following features:

(a) Movement of people: the major cities in the West Bank will be closed off and Palestinian travel between cities in the West Bank will no longer be possible without a permit issued by the Israeli authorities. In addition, Palestinians (including United Nations and donor national staff) will no longer be allowed to travel from the West Bank or Gaza to Israel or East Jerusalem. International staff, including diplomats, will be subject to a search of their car and possibly luggage when entering Israel through Erez (from Gaza);

(b) Movement of goods: the movement of goods from Israel to the West Bank, and between cities

within the West Bank, will be subject to the back-to-back system (previously the back-to-back system had been in place in a very limited form for the West Bank and only for the transport of goods across the Green Line). A total of eight checkpoint locations (near major Palestinian cities in the West Bank) have been designated as "back-to-back" areas and are the only places where the exchange can take place. Trucks with United Nations or donor plates transporting humanitarian goods or donor project-related goods will be allowed to access the West Bank on the condition that the truck is driven by an international driver. The movement of donor and United Nations goods into Gaza will only be allowed for humanitarian goods (mainly food supplies).

37. While the international community recognizes Israel's legitimate security concerns, especially in the context of continuing suicide attacks, which have been repeatedly condemned by the Secretary-General, these new measures are regarded as extremely alarming not only because of their legal implications but also because of their dramatic impact on the ability of agencies to provide humanitarian and development-oriented assistance. Moreover, as these measures will have a significant negative effect on the already weak Palestinian economy, it is more than likely that United Nations/donor involvement will be forced to shift to humanitarian activities and the long-term effects of millions of past development assistance will be negated.

## **B. Priority needs still unmet**

38. In its March 2002 assessment of the Palestinian economy, the World Bank outlined three different scenarios of the impact of political developments on the economic prospects for the West Bank and Gaza, with corresponding levels of donor commitment over the coming years. The three scenarios were as follows:

(a) "Status quo" scenario, referring to the early 2002 levels of closure and confrontations, with restricted movement of goods and people but continued access by 50,000 labourers to Israel, donor budget support maintained at projected levels (\$64 million per month), and no payment of tax revenues due from Israel;

(b) "Political rapprochement" scenario, leading to a cessation of hostilities, a lifting of closure and a resumption of revenue transfers by Israel;

(c) "Tightened closure" scenario, involving harsher closure, with armed confrontation resulting in

considerable additional physical damage and heavy disruption of trade and movement, along with a virtual closing off of any labour access to Israel. Donor budget support would continue at projected levels and there would be no payment of the aforementioned tax revenues.

39. The situation on the ground has deteriorated to the level anticipated in the third scenario, although this does not rule out future evolution towards other scenarios. This means that, in order to cover the above needs under the current scenario, \$1.7 billion would be needed for 2002 at a minimum, of which \$956 million is already available, leaving a gap of \$766 million, it being understood that, for any economic recovery to take place, closures and tightened restrictions on the movement of goods and people must imperatively be lifted. As a result of the damage during the March/April Israeli incursions, physical reconstruction (private sector, infrastructure, housing, heritage, Palestinian Authority institutions and buildings) has become even more of a priority, as has emergency assistance to Palestinians suffering from the breakdown of the infrastructure, from the lack of access to services and from unemployment. The extreme level of closure also means that much of what remains of the Palestinian private sector will shut down, and law and order and the delivery of social services will be further crippled. With regard to the Palestinian Authority's fiscal outlook, this will largely be shaped by developments in the underlying political environment. Given the high degree of uncertainty in that environment, any projection of the Palestinian Authority's fiscal needs in the coming year must be viewed as highly tentative. It is estimated that the Palestinian Authority will need \$924 million in external budgetary assistance in 2002 if Israel does not resume the transfer of clearance revenues. If the transfers are resumed, the financing requirement will drop to about \$600 million.

40. Reporting from the perspective of the current tightened closure scenario, United Nations agencies stress the need for increased intervention in their respective sectors. WHO emphasizes the fact that the financial situation of the Ministry of Health is endangering the functioning of the health services while movement restrictions are having a very negative effect on the health of the Palestinian people. As long as the closure policy is in place, WHO, other health actors and, more generally, social services providers

will have to build on short-term strategies to minimize the impact on the delivery systems, at steadily increasing costs. The Organization also points out the need for continuous assessments of the health situation and response capacity; for support to ensure the continuous services of the preventative health programme; for the formulation of strategies for drug distribution; and for the strengthening of the surveillance system of disease and nutritional status with the major health providers. Within this sector, UNFPA underscores the need for improvement of the capacity of key Palestinian institutions in charge of planning for and managing reproductive health programmes; for strengthening ongoing efforts to increase the availability of and access to basic and quality reproductive health services; for the rehabilitation of clinics and ensuring availability of essential drugs and medical supplies; and for developing the mental health capacities of the Palestinian health system. UNRWA emphasizes the widespread destruction of housing, schools, clinics, electricity supplies and water and sanitation systems, and estimates that an additional \$70 million is required to meet the emergency humanitarian needs of refugees in the West Bank and Gaza. Urgent assistance to the education sector, employment generation and reconstruction of homes/shelters are other priorities stressed by UNRWA. WFP points out that the halt in economic activities due to closure and damage has meant that access by the poor to food has been further curtailed. The Programme therefore emphasizes the need for increased emergency operations to cover the new need for food delivery in the territories. The highest priority of UNDP within its programmes is the rehabilitation of institutional and structural damage to the public and private sectors; employment generation remains another top priority, as does support for capacity-building in the public sector and anticipated administrative reform.

### **C. Enhanced coordination**

41. The donor community and United Nations agencies agree on the need to increase coordination among donors and between donors and the Palestinian Authority. This includes assistance in the development of a Palestinian emergency plan; supporting the strengthening of the core economic management institutions of the Palestinian Authority; and further reanimating aid coordination mechanisms, including

for development activities. In terms of relief efforts in the field during the March/May crisis, UNRWA took the lead in coordinating and carrying United Nations assistance to the civilian population throughout the West Bank, with the help of its own staff and that of other United Nations agencies, who worked at considerable risk to their safety. United Nations agencies continued operating both their regular programmes (to the extent that these were able to operate under the conditions prevailing at the time) and their emergency activities with a skeleton staff. In the immediate aftermath of the military operation, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs also began establishing a humanitarian information centre — a humanitarian data collection, analysis, reporting and public information centre serving the information needs of all stakeholders, including the Palestinian Authority, donors and relief operators. In addition, the team from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs served as a humanitarian focal point for UNSCO and provided the office of the Special Coordinator with humanitarian information and analytical input. UNSCO led efforts with the Government of Israel in an attempt to ensure that humanitarian agencies would have full and unhindered access to populations in need. All of those efforts took place within an overall coordination structure established by the co-chairs of the Local Aid Coordination Committee to ensure prioritization, reduce overlaps and assure efficiency in the overall humanitarian response.

## V. Conclusions

42. **The political crisis in the Middle East has deepened in the last year. However, despite the death and destruction, some grounds for optimism emerged. There is a growing consensus in the international community around a vision for peace in the Middle East — one of two States, Israel and Palestine, living side by side within secure and recognized borders in an economically prosperous region. The international community remains committed to pursuing this vision in a comprehensive manner, seeking parallel progress in the security, political and economic dimensions of the crisis.**

43. **However, the current situation in the occupied Palestinian territory is characterized by a deepening economic crisis with growing humanitarian**

**consequences. The Palestinian people are facing a threat of economic collapse and social destitution. Continued emergency economic and social assistance is needed, but this cannot be a substitute for a resumption of political dialogue and progress towards an agreed solution. At the same time, specific steps can be identified which could ease the economic and humanitarian impact of closures and other movement restrictions, as well as the fiscal situation.**

44. **The tightening closure regime in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, implemented by Israel as its response to terrorist attacks on its citizens, is the immediate and single most important cause of this looming economic and social crisis, a crisis whose ramifications are profound. It is also undermining Palestinian, United Nations and donor efforts to pursue and support a reform process for the Palestinian Authority.**

45. **The aid community is faced with a multidimensional challenge: to continue to support medium- and long-term development activities and capacity-building for the Palestinian Authority and Palestinian civil society, while at the same time assisting in the repair of physical and institutional damage and responding to the growing emergency humanitarian needs of the population. The aid community is attempting to do this in a context of violence and violations of the norms established by international humanitarian law pertaining to the protection of civilians. Particularly distressing have been the impediments faced by the aid community in reaching civilian victims of the conflict.**

46. **United Nations involvement and assistance to the Palestinian people will require close collaboration among donors and with the Palestinian Authority and constant review of priorities in the light of changing circumstances. Existing funds may need to be reprogrammed and additional funding must be found to support repair, reconstruction and growing humanitarian needs. Unless and until there is real political progress, the United Nations system needs to be prepared for a situation in which an increasing number of Palestinians will be dependent upon welfare and the generosity of the international community.**

47. **Meeting the immediate challenges requires, by the parties, full respect for their obligations under international humanitarian law, and that they make**

every effort to facilitate the work of United Nations agencies and the donor and aid communities. The far-reaching efforts of the donors to provide financial assistance for the humanitarian agencies and to support the Palestinian Authority's budget are to be commended and must continue. I call upon the international community to provide the necessary resources for the assistance programmes for the Palestinian people. I would draw particular attention to the latest emergency appeal of UNRWA, which provides vital services for hundreds of thousands of Palestinians.

48. For its part the United Nations, working both within the Quartet and with the donor community, will continue to advocate an end to violence, including terrorism, and to promote a meaningful resumption of political dialogue between the parties leading to the achievement of a comprehensive, just and lasting political settlement of the conflict based on relevant United Nations resolutions and "land for peace". At the same time, the United Nations will continue to seek a resumption of progress towards an economically vibrant region where Palestinian living conditions, as well as those of Israel and all others in the region, would provide a strong underpinning to peace and reconciliation between peoples.

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**Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: special economic assistance to individual countries or regions**

**Economic and Social Council  
Substantive session of 2003**

Geneva, 30 June-25 July 2003

Item 9 of the provisional agenda\*\*

**Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations**

## Assistance to the Palestinian people

### Report of the Secretary-General

#### *Summary*

The year under review saw the continuation of violence between Israelis and Palestinians, with hundreds of victims on both sides. Tight internal and external closures, widespread curfews, incursions and other measures taken by the Israeli military led to a further worsening of economic indicators and to an increase in poverty and unemployment levels among Palestinians. The capacity of the Palestinian Authority was diminished just as needs increased. The central challenge facing authorities and the international community was how to meet growing emergency and humanitarian needs at the same time as maintaining medium and longer-term objectives.

The United Nations system continued to work hard to maintain Palestinian capacities to provide essential services, to repair damage to infrastructure and to meet urgent needs. However, the planning, management and implementation of projects were hampered by restrictions placed on United Nations staff, notably locally recruited Palestinian staff, a deteriorating security environment and problems of access. This often required re-gearing of programmes and a shift in emphasis from development to emergency activity.

The present report outlines the efforts made by the United Nations system, in cooperation with Palestinian and donor counterparts, in order to support the Palestinian civilian population under extremely difficult circumstances.

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\* A/58/50/Rev.1 and Corr.1.

\*\* E/2003/100.



## **I. Introduction**

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 57/147 of 16 December 2002 on assistance to the Palestinian people, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to it at its fifty-eighth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the resolution. The report covers the period from June 2002 to May 2003.

2. It should be noted that information concerning the living conditions of the Palestinian people is provided in separate, periodic reports prepared by the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority (UNSCO). In addition, a separate report prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan (A/58/75-E/2003/21), provides detailed information on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, including the current crisis situation. The annual report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) provides information, inter alia, on the socio-economic conditions of the registered refugee population in the occupied Palestinian territory.<sup>1</sup>

3. Throughout the period under review, the United Nations Special Coordinator has maintained his efforts to fulfil the mandate of his office, including ensuring effective coordination between the relevant institutions of the Palestinian Authority, the United Nations and the international community, as well as documenting the economic and social conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory.

## **II. Overview of the current crisis**

### **A. Background**

4. Since the outbreak of the violence in September 2000, more than 2,500 Palestinians and 700 Israelis have lost their lives, while many more have been wounded on both sides. This has been the result of, on the one hand, terrorist attacks against Israelis by various Palestinian factions and, on the other hand, extensive retaliatory operations, pre-emptive strikes and attacks on suspected militants by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), as well as violence perpetrated by settlers.

5. In view of the continued cycle of violence and the complete impasse between Israel and the Palestinians, the international community took the lead in proposing a way out of the current crisis. On 30 April 2003, the Quartet (composed of the United States, the United Nations, the European Union and the Russian Federation) formally presented to the parties its road map,<sup>2</sup> a plan that proposes parallel steps to be taken by both sides to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and end the occupation that began in 1967, by realizing the vision of two States, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security.

## **B. Humanitarian and socio-economic crisis**

6. As observed in August 2002 by the Personal Humanitarian Envoy of the Secretary-General, Catherine Bertini, the proximate cause of the Palestinian humanitarian and economic crises has been Israel's systematic imposition of severe restrictions on the movement of Palestinian goods and people across borders and within the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This strict closure policy has effectively divided the occupied Palestinian territory into approximately 50 isolated pockets. Furthermore, the residents of these areas have frequently been obliged to live under sustained curfews imposed by IDF, often for many days or weeks at a time.

7. The policy of systematic closures led to a four-fold crisis. First, the Palestinian economy shrunk dramatically, resulting in widespread unemployment and poverty, which lowered average incomes and limited the ability of Palestinians to purchase basic commodities and services. Secondly, access to services was severely limited owing to the restrictions on Palestinians' freedom of movement. Thirdly, damage to many public facilities and the severe fiscal crisis of the Palestinian Authority resulted in mounting difficulties in maintaining the provision of services. Lastly, movement restrictions also hampered the ability of international organizations such as the United Nations and aid agencies to reach their target populations so as to provide much needed humanitarian relief. Efforts to adapt to these movement restrictions led to an increase in the cost of humanitarian aid delivery.

8. Owing to internal closures, access to health-care services, which are mainly located in cities, was severely curtailed. These limitations were particularly threatening to patients who required regular follow-up and treatment for chronic conditions. Food security was also severely affected. Per capita food consumption declined by 30 per cent in the past two years. The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) reported that approximately one in every four women and children under five years of age suffered from mild anaemia, while 15.3 per cent of children under five years of age and 6.1 per cent of women between the ages of 15 and 49 suffered from moderate anaemia. Many schools were unable to operate for extended periods during curfews. According to the World Bank, 170,000 children and over 6,650 teachers were unable to reach their regular classrooms and at least 580 schools were closed owing to curfews, closures and home confinement.

9. Dramatic increases in unemployment and poverty were seen throughout the occupied Palestinian territory. According to a World Bank report entitled "Two Years of Intifada, Closures and Palestinian Economic Crisis: An Assessment", published in March 2003, 60 per cent of the population of the West Bank and Gaza lived under a poverty line of US\$ 2 per day, up from 20 per cent in 1999. The numbers of the poor tripled from 637,000 in September 2000 to nearly 2 million in March 2003 and gross national income per capita fell to nearly half of what it was two years ago. More than 50 per cent of the work force was unemployed and more than half of Palestinians were receiving some form of donor-financed food assistance.

10. Private sector activity, the engine of economic growth, also suffered severely as a result of declining incomes and failing demand, political uncertainty and the impact of closures and violence. According to the Palestinian Federation of Industries, by July 2002, 17 per cent of all businesses in the occupied Palestinian territory had shut down and only 7 per cent were operating at pre-crisis levels.

About a third of all businesses encountered serious debt service problems. Between June 2000 and June 2002, Palestinian exports declined by almost a half and imports by a third. Investment shrank from an estimated \$1.5 billion in 1999 to only \$140 million in 2002. Overall income losses in the first two years of the conflict reached \$5.4 billion, the equivalent of one full year of national income prior to the crisis. Agricultural production also seriously declined. The construction of a “separation wall” by the Government of Israel, which began in late summer 2002, was expected to reduce farmers’ access to their land further and therefore represents yet a new form of closure. If the closure policy persists, the private sector is expected to experience further decline, with serious long-term structural consequences. In addition to the losses incurred on various levels owing to closure, physical damage resulting from IDF incursions and attacks amounted to losses of \$728 million by the end of August 2002, including substantial damage to agricultural systems, infrastructure, public buildings and private houses. Extensive damage was caused to dwellings and the household effects of thousands of families in the occupied Palestinian territory. In April-May 2002, a donor-led damage assessment estimated the number of damaged and destroyed private and refugee housing units to be over 40,000.

### **C. Palestinian Authority fiscal situation**

11. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) reported that the fiscal position of the Palestinian Authority was precarious and that it remained highly dependent on external budget support to pay civil servant salaries and to deliver key services. As a result of rising unemployment, reduced demand, increased difficulties in tax collection and the continued withholding by the Government of Israel of taxes collected on the Palestinian Authority’s behalf, monthly revenues dropped from \$91 million in late 2000 to \$19 million in March 2003. A collapse of the Palestinian Authority was avoided by donor budget support, which totalled \$1.1 billion over the last two years. The recent resumption of tax revenue transfers by the Government of Israel was a positive development and allowed the Ministry of Finance to present, for the first time, a consolidated budget for 2003 to the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC). On 1 February 2003, PLC approved the 2003 budget of the Palestinian Authority. The Ad Hoc Liaison Committee noted that, even assuming the newly reinstated regular monthly revenue transfers by Israel, continued budget support from donors at a level of \$44.6 million per month, for a total of \$535 million in 2003, was necessary to ensure that the budget was fully funded and arrears were settled.

## **III. United Nations response to the crisis**

### **A. United Nations development assistance**

12. Upon the outbreak of violence in September 2000 and the further worsening of the humanitarian situation owing to the Israeli incursions in April 2002, the United Nations system in the occupied Palestinian territory faced the challenge of rapidly adapting its activities and assistance to respond to the growing socio-economic crisis and emergency needs on the ground. This required the adoption of a two-track strategy that comprised both emergency humanitarian assistance and the

continuation, whenever and however possible, of ongoing development programmes. Some long-term development activities were postponed or cancelled, as priority had to be given to emergency activities. Despite the difficult working conditions, however, many development initiatives continued and these are discussed briefly below, according to the sectors defined by the Palestinian Authority in its Palestinian Development Plan.

### **Infrastructure and natural resources management**

13. During the reporting period, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) continued its technical assistance and infrastructure support to local government in microregions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In the area of environmental conservation, UNDP and the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) continued to work together to preserve the wetlands in the Gaza Strip. The programme to clean up the wetlands of Wadi Gaza and turn them into a nature reserve is scheduled to be completed by July 2003. With \$7.8 million from the Government of Japan, UNDP initiated a project to develop a storm-water drainage system in the southern Gaza Strip in order to alleviate damage caused during the rainy season. Environmental health services provided by UNRWA to the refugee camp population included sewage disposal, management of storm-water runoff, provision of safe drinking water, collection and disposal of refuse and control of insect and rodent infestation. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) prepared a desk study on the state of the environment in the occupied Palestinian territory.

### **Institutional capacity-building**

14. UNDP played an important role in the Palestinian Authority reform efforts. Thanks to start-up support and technical assistance provided through UNDP and other donors, the Palestinian Central Elections Commission has been established and is functioning. UNDP also allocated funds for reform of local government and initiated a diagnostic study to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the local government system. Within the financial domain, UNDP provided support to reform the internal audit capacity of the Palestinian Authority in close cooperation with the Ministry of Finance and the General Control Institute.

15. The four-year Assistance to the Palestinian People programme of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) consists of three subprogrammes, namely Reproductive Health, Population and Development Strategies, and Advocacy. Under its Population and Development Strategies subprogramme, UNFPA assisted Bir Zeit University in developing curricula for a multidisciplinary graduate course on population and development. Furthermore, UNFPA launched a project to strengthen the capacity of PCBS, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education to promote connectivity between various elements of the statistical system. Progress was also achieved to integrate population communication concepts into the curricula of the Mass Communication Department at An-Najah University. With UNFPA support, PCBS launched a programme on population research and training of decision makers and middle managers on utilization of census and survey data. The contribution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to this sector included an independent mission to evaluate the Palestinian News Agency, WAFA.

16. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) was able to complete phase I of the Customs Administration capacity-building project and achieved progress in four other ongoing technical assistance projects: support for small and medium-sized enterprise development; strengthening capacities in debt-monitoring and financial analysis; strengthening trade efficiency and strengthening trade policies and strategies.

17. The International Labour Organization (ILO) was in the process of concluding its technical assistance programme to the Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions (PGFTU). This included capacity-building at the regional level and skills training at the local level and strengthening PGFTU training centres. Through its Better Skills for a Better Future project, ILO aimed to improve the quality of information technology skills by equipping computer training centres at Ministry of Labour vocational training centres in Ramallah, Jenin and Khan Younis. During the period under review, UNEP support allowed various Palestinian ministers and professionals to attend international conferences related to environmental issues in their respective sectors.

### **Human resources and social development**

18. In the education sector, the single largest area of UNRWA activity, the Agency's expenditure in 2002 in the occupied Palestinian territory was \$84.4 million. The UNRWA education programme represents the Agency's chief investment in the human resources of Palestine refugee youth in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. However, despite progress in the construction and upgrading of Agency schools, lack of funds and sites for school construction meant that many schools continued to be accommodated in unsatisfactory rented premises and suffered from overcrowding. Through its Vocational and Technical Training Centres, the Agency provided skills training programmes for youth, in-service teacher training and pre-service teacher training, leading, during the 2002-2003 school year, to a first university degree for 2,596 trainees, of which over 1,000 were women. The UNDP Palestinian Schoolnet Project launched an educational Internet portal in May 2002 and established 20 computer centres in schools throughout the occupied Palestinian territory. UNESCO continued its project aimed at providing financial assistance to some 55 Palestinian students for university studies abroad.

19. In the health sector, UNRWA operated 51 health facilities, which provided comprehensive primary health care, handling 3.3 million patient visits in 2002. In addition, the Agency provided maternal health care through six maternity units integrated within its health centres in the Gaza Strip. UNRWA expenditure in 2002 for its health programme in the occupied Palestinian territory was \$25.1 million. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) focused on safeguarding important public health investments, such as child immunization campaigns. UNFPA activities in this sector included supporting provision of quality reproductive services and counselling in 48 health facilities through a comprehensive training programme for some 100 health personnel. Through a joint UNFPA/UNICEF initiative to improve adolescent lives, a plan of action was put together with the Ministry of Health to integrate reproductive health and gender concepts in the curricula of the 9th and 10th grades. UNFPA and the OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) Fund for International Development, together with the Ministry, launched a joint project for prevention and management of HIV/AIDS in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. In cooperation with the Ministry, the World Health Organization

(WHO) finalized the essential drug list now used as a basis for drug procurement. WHO further continued functioning as the secretariat of the Health Sector Working Group. Within the same donors-Palestinian Authority coordination framework, thematic subgroups on nutrition, mental health, health management information and reproductive health were established. WHO implemented activities in the area of nutrition, including the development of a nutritional and epidemiological surveillance system, and its Food Safety Initiative involved conducting training courses on the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point System. The Brucellosis Control Project, implemented by WHO and UNDP with the relevant ministries, entered its final stages. The organization's Mental Health Programme included developing long-term mental health policy and legislation and an emergency project involving the support of community mental health centres. WHO was also engaged in its Decentralized Cooperation project, which involved linking communities in donor countries with communities in the developing world.

20. During the reporting period, UNDP published the Palestinian Poverty Report and the Human Development Report for 2002 and launched the Millennium Development Goals Report for the occupied Palestinian territory.

### **Human rights and women**

21. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights began its current two-year project in August 2002. This project included support for the rule of law in the form of human rights education. The Office conducted a number of training courses, such as four lawyer courses, one course on human rights for prison guards at the Gaza Central Prison and two human rights courses for Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation staff and Palestinian journalists. It supported and organized the visit of two staff of the Palestinian Legislative Council to South Africa and the development of guidelines on arrest and detention and the use of force and firearms for the Palestinian police. It continued its Assisting Communities Together (ACT) project to support grass-roots initiatives for the promotion and protection of human rights by means of small grant projects provided jointly by the Office and UNDP. UNICEF supported activities designed to promote the peaceful and non-violent participation of children and youth in the social and cultural life of the occupied Palestinian territory through summer camps, sports activities and youth forums. UNFPA worked to enhance further the capacity of three women's centres in reproductive health and psychosocial and legal counselling.

### **Productive sectors**

22. UNDP continued its active support for rural and economic development. Approximately \$5.8 million in new projects in land reclamation and integrated rural development were initiated during the reporting period. In August 2002, UNDP launched a project to improve the economic stability of Bedouin communities in the West Bank and a project to revitalize the handicraft industry in the Bethlehem district. Under the UNDP employment generation scheme, \$3 million were allocated to restore and rehabilitate cultural heritage sites damaged in the conflict. To help alleviate poverty, a component of the UNFPA economic empowerment project was introduced, whereby disadvantaged women and their families were trained on managing small businesses and received loans or grants. WHO launched its Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) Initiative for the purpose of working towards the implementation of the WHO GMP standard. ILO proposed the creation of a

Palestinian Fund for Employment and Social Protection. Its role would be to design and deliver efficient and effective solutions to aid the growth of social and human capital, support the development of the Palestinian business community and create job opportunities that address the needs of the most vulnerable groups of the population.

23. In October 2002, UNESCO carried out a cultural heritage mission to finalize the plan of action for the Conservation Master Plan for Bethlehem. Two more cultural heritage missions were dispatched to Nablus at the end of 2002 for the project on technical assistance for the rehabilitation of the Khan Al-Wakalat caravanserai.

## **B. United Nations assistance emergency focus**

### **Infrastructure and natural resources management**

24. UNRWA continued implementation of its Jenin Rehabilitation Project, which includes reconstruction of the homes of 419 families that were demolished in the refugee camp during the Israeli military incursion in April 2002. Furthermore, by the end of February 2003, UNRWA had provided financial assistance to 3,134 families to repair minor damage to their homes. The rebuilding of sections of the camp destroyed in April 2002 and of homes damaged in subsequent IDF incursions was seriously hampered by closures, curfews and Israeli military operations. In spite of these obstacles, removal of all debris was completed by the end of March 2003. WHO provided the engineering consultancy to assess the condition of the infrastructure in the camp and to prepare a feasibility study and cost estimates for any new and remedial work needed to ensure a reliable water supply and drainage system. The assessment of water and waste-water networks began on 20 February 2003.

25. In the Gaza Strip, since the beginning of the crisis in September 2000, a total of 1,083 shelters belonging to 1,098 refugee families (7,466 persons) were destroyed or damaged beyond repair as a result of Israeli military actions. Some 1,165 additional shelters sustained various degrees of repairable damage. In response, UNRWA in Gaza reconstructed, or is in the process of reconstructing, 983 dwellings. Further repairs on 1,110 shelters were either finished or under way. Between 1 May 2002 and 31 March 2003, UNRWA offered financial assistance totalling \$1,030,446 to 141 families to reconstruct their dwellings that were destroyed in the West Bank (excluding Jenin). Financial assistance amounting to \$274,853 went to another 102 families whose dwellings sustained major structural damage. A total of 6,520 families received grants totalling \$2,707,232 to carry out minor repairs to their homes.

### **Emergency support to key sectors**

26. UNRWA addressed the challenges presented by curfews and closures to its educational programmes by conducting remedial classes for 60,000 children in the Gaza Strip. In the West Bank, the Agency's ability to mount effective and sustained emergency education interventions was undercut by a regime of closure that restricted movement to a much greater degree than in the Gaza Strip. There were 9,708 students in the West Bank attending remedial education classes as of 31 March 2003, while 7,879 students took part in extra-curricular activities during the

summer of 2002. The UNICEF response to the education emergency also focused on ensuring that as many children as possible had the opportunity to continue learning, even if they could not reach their schools owing to closure and curfew. To this end, UNICEF supported alternative education projects and the “back to school” campaign to ensure that 1 million Palestinian children would be back in school by September 2002.

27. UNRWA emergency interventions in the health sector included the provision of mobile medical teams and enhancing the capacity of emergency and casualty care systems. UNRWA also established a community-based programme for providing counselling and psychological support to vulnerable population groups in the West Bank with special emphasis on youth and children. UNRWA assistance to refugees sustaining physically disabling injuries took the form of physiotherapy, prostheses, training and modifications to housing to enhance physical mobility. UNDP provided emergency funding for health sector medical equipment, supplies and training. Given the grave consequences of restricted access for women in labour, UNFPA continued a community-based emergency obstetric care programme, whereby training was provided to 160 health personnel in maternal and newborn care. Medical equipment and supplies, essential obstetric drugs and contraceptives were procured by UNFPA. The UNICEF response to the increased psychosocial distress among Palestinian children included the training of school counsellors, kindergarten teachers and social workers, while UNDP was in the process of establishing three district-level psychological counselling centres. With UNFPA support, psychosocial counselling was provided to women and their families through three model women health centres, and to youth and adolescents within the school health and counselling programmes. WHO supported the establishment of the Health Inforum, aimed at supporting decision-making capacities of the health sector working groups and focusing on the collection of health data. WHO provided the Ministry of Health with logistic support for the transportation of medicines and vaccines and continued to provide customs clearance support to United Nations agencies and the Ministry.

28. The World Food Programme (WFP) approved, in May 2002, its emergency operation programme, the objective of which is to cover the increased food requirements of the non-refugee population affected by the current humanitarian crisis. In addition, in 2003 WFP began a supplementary feeding programme for 6,145 malnourished children and their families in the Gaza Strip and the southern West Bank. WFP was also providing 11,190 metric tons of foodstuffs to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to assist 180,000 hardship cases in the rural areas of the West Bank. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, in close technical cooperation with WFP, UNDP/Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People and UNRWA, assisted in the drafting of the Food Security Strategy for the Humanitarian Action Plan for 2003. The overall objective of this plan was to prevent deterioration in the nutritional situation of the population and a collapse of the agriculture-based household economy.

29. Although its technical assistance is mainly geared to addressing institutional capacity needs, in the last quarter of 2002 UNCTAD initiated joint efforts with the Palestinian Authority Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry and the Palestinian Agriculture Relief Committee (PARC) to support the livelihood of Palestinian farmers. The objective was to assist Palestinian farmers to market their large surplus of olive oil through international trade and targeted market access.



### **Human rights and women**

30. UNFPA, WHO and UNICEF formed an advocacy group on health to promote easy access to health care for the Palestinian population. UNFPA helped the Ministry of Health to produce a documentary on the adverse impact of the closures on access of women in labour to hospitals and for safeguarding reproductive rights of Palestinians. Furthermore, the group assisted PCBS in assessing the impact of the construction of the Israeli “separation wall” and the resulting displacement of populations. Through a UNFPA initiative, participants from four Palestinian women’s NGOs were trained in Bratislava on effective techniques to promote gender concerns in emergencies and post-conflict situations.

### **Emergency support to productive sectors**

31. Since September 2000, UNDP has mobilized over \$100 million for its Emergency Response Programme, designed to provide humanitarian assistance and alleviate economic hardship, mainly through labour-intensive, employment-generating infrastructure projects. Major projects initiated by UNDP include projects to restore damaged public and private infrastructure in towns and refugee camps, as well as health-care infrastructure, employment generation through restoration of damaged historical sites and the “Tashghil” project, designed to create jobs by developing and improving social and agricultural infrastructure and cultural heritage sites. UNDP also launched a multicomponent humanitarian assistance project designed to reactivate local markets by buying local products for food distribution.

32. WFP implemented its Food-For-Work and Food-For-Training schemes wherever possible in order to sustain agriculture and food production in the current conditions. A total of 17,500 families were participating in community works that include terracing, rehabilitation of agricultural land, rural access roads and water systems, home gardens and rehabilitation of schools and clinics. Furthermore, with the goal of providing vital support to 1,600 poor farmers, WFP purchased locally and redistributed 272 metric tons of olive oil, the main local agricultural produce. As part of its response to worsening levels of poverty among refugees, UNRWA expanded the number of short-term employment opportunities, with an emphasis on the Gaza Strip. By the end of March 2003, over 272,000 individuals had benefited from this programme since its inception in January 2001. UNCTAD initiated joint efforts with the Palestinian Authority Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, and PARC, to support the livelihood of Palestinian farmers by assisting them to market their large surplus of olive oil.

## **C. Coordination**

33. UNSCO provided support to United Nations programmes and agencies in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, both those with representation in the field and those based abroad. UNSCO convened the monthly United Nations coordination meeting, which was the principal forum for coordination of United Nations development assistance in the occupied Palestinian territory. During the reporting period, eight such meetings were held with the participation of 12 agencies working in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

34. On 12 November 2002, UNSCO organized the annual United Nations inter-agency meeting to provide the United Nations and assistance community with the opportunity to review the findings of the report entitled: "Humanitarian Plan of Action for the Occupied Palestinian Territory". The meeting served as an opportunity for discussion among the wider aid community about a strategic response to the humanitarian aspects of the current crisis. The meeting, which was also attended by the Palestinian Authority, identified further work that needs to be undertaken in the following areas: (i) development of a strategic approach to humanitarian needs; (ii) strengthening the coordination structure with emphasis on the Palestinian Authority's leading role; (iii) creation of an access tracking device in terms of delivery and utilization of assistance; and (iv) integration of advocacy into humanitarian work. Within the wider donor coordination framework, UNSCO continued to represent the United Nations system in various donor bodies aimed at strengthening the programmatic and advisory role of the United Nations, particularly in facilitating Palestinian Authority-donor relationships.

35. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs established five field offices with a view to supporting local coordination and priority-setting. Through its field offices and the establishment of the Humanitarian Information Centre, the Office provided extensive and relevant information on the humanitarian situation and tracked issues which affect the situation, such as closures and curfews, house demolitions and access problems. The Centre also hosted an incident tracking system, which assisted the United Nations and other partners in their dealings with the Israeli authorities. The Office further compiled information and data on the humanitarian crisis with a view to raising awareness and respect for international humanitarian law and facilitating sustainable solutions to the crisis.

#### **IV. Donor response to the crisis**

36. Since 2000, the donor community rapidly adapted its activities to respond to the socio-economic and humanitarian consequences of the crisis, without losing sight of medium and long-term development programmes. While donor commitments increased in 2002, the ratio of development assistance to emergency and budgetary assistance shifted from 7:1 in 2000 to 1:5 in 2002. Although overall commitments increased by 57 per cent in the period, development assistance declined by 70 per cent, while emergency and budgetary assistance increased by a factor of 10. During the reporting period, international community support focused on Palestinian Authority institutional reform efforts, direct support to the Palestinian Authority budget and on mitigating the impact of the economic and social crisis.

##### **A. Support to Palestinian reform**

37. In response to the publication of the 100-day Plan of Reform by the Palestinian Authority, in July 2002 the Quartet established the Task Force on Palestinian Reform in order to monitor and support implementation of Palestinian civil reforms and guide the international donor community in its support for the Palestinians reform agenda. This has resulted in significant technical and programmatic donor support in all reform areas. The Task Force worked with Palestinians to develop the Reform Action Plan, which highlighted Palestinian commitments, established

benchmarks, identified obstacles to reform and proposed areas for donor assistance. It conducted its activities through seven Reform Support Groups in the areas of civil society, elections, financial accountability, judicial and rule of law reform, market economics, local government and public administration and civil service reform.

38. In its meeting in London on 20 February 2003, the Task Force recognized that the ongoing conflict, continued restrictions on freedom of movement of persons and goods, deterioration of the humanitarian situation and destruction of local infrastructure and facilities constituted a significant hindrance to reforms. Noting the difficult security situation, it welcomed the clear and considerable progress made in several areas of Palestinian civil reform, in particular, the implementation of significantly higher standards of fiscal transparency and accountability, as well as work towards development of the public institutions and laws needed to promote a market economy. The Task Force also welcomed the decision of the Government of Israel to resume monthly transfers of Palestinian tax revenues, which permitted the Ministry of Finance to submit a fully financed budget for 2003.

39. The Task Force commended efforts to develop appropriate legislation and to coordinate economic policy with Palestinian business leaders. It also noted the considerable progress made in public administration and civil service reform but observed that progress in some areas, such as judicial reform, had been much slower. While acknowledging Israel's legitimate security concerns, there was consensus in the Task Force that mobility restrictions constituted a major impediment to reform, slowing progress and undermining the credibility of the reform process in many areas.

## **B. Emergency support**

40. *Budgetary support.* According to IMF, Palestinian Authority average monthly expenditures dropped from \$107 million prior to the crisis to \$82 million in the first half of 2002. Non-wage expenditures accounted for only \$24 million in mid-2002. This was relieved somewhat in late 2002 with the emergency services support programme, which, from September 2002 to February 2003, provided an average of \$5.5 million per month for non-salary expenditures. Of the total international support in 2002, 56 per cent of the international commitments (and 60 per cent of the disbursement) went to budgetary support of the Palestinian Authority and municipalities. However, international budgetary support remained below what was needed. While the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee estimated the budgetary support needs for 2002 to be \$876 million, actual disbursement was only \$450 million. Palestinian Authority budgetary support from donors was not allocated formally to any particular public expenditure line; however, it provided 53 per cent of the Palestinian Authority's cash expenditures in the 2002 budget and ensured that its top fiscal priority — the payment of salaries — could be met. (Donors effectively financed some 75,000 staff and their families, in total, 480,000 people.) For the first time since its establishment, the Palestinian Authority published a detailed general budget for 2003. The budget aimed to eliminate any financing gap in 2003 and to clear the Palestinian Authority's debt, thereby restoring its credibility with the private sector, while providing a major stimulus to the recovery of commercial activity. For this to succeed, two things were needed: continued regular transfers by the Israeli Government of withheld tax revenues and continued donor budgetary support.

41. *Non-budgetary support.* Representatives at the meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, held in Oslo in April 2002, noted the continued need for donor support in basic service delivery, private sector support, employment and welfare and physical reconstruction. Assistance in these areas needed to strike a balance — to the extent possible — between responding to emergency needs and the medium-term development priorities, while avoiding the creation of habitual dependencies. As the World Bank's economic assessment showed, support in all of the areas fell significantly short of the needs estimated by the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee. The \$921 million needed translated to the disbursement of \$329 million. In terms of basic service delivery, of the needed \$219 million, \$94 million were disbursed. The private sector received \$19 million of the needed \$75 million. Of the \$327 million needed for employment and welfare, \$151 million were actually disbursed. In terms of physical reconstruction, while the needs were estimated at \$300 million, the disbursement was \$65 million. The discrepancy between needs and actual disbursements was due to a number of factors. In some cases, donor institutional priorities affected the disbursement, while in others, the unavailability of funds and competing priorities caused the shortfall. Furthermore, in areas such as physical reconstruction, the Palestinian Authority and the donors were reluctant to repair infrastructure that could well be damaged again in the near future. According to the Palestinian Emergency and Public Investment Plan, issued in January 2003, priority areas requiring support in 2003 were job creation, cash and food assistance, health and environmental health, education and social services.

### **C. Donor coordination**

42. The Ad Hoc Liaison Committee met again in London on 18 and 19 February 2003. It focused on the socio-economic and humanitarian situation, the fiscal situation, Palestinian reform, challenges to the assistance community and strategies for 2003. Committee members reaffirmed their commitment to restoring the capacity of the Palestinian Authority at the national and municipal levels to deliver basic services and provide law and order and agreed to work to recreate the conditions of normal economic life. Israel's cooperation in easing restrictions on the movement of goods and people and facilitating and safeguarding the work of the donor community were seen as central to these objectives. While the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee meeting was not a formal pledging conference, a number of donors announced financial contributions to meet immediate needs. Emergency needs for 2003 total approximately \$2 billion. Of this, donors have pledged to disburse \$1.2 billion during the course of the year.

43. The reporting period saw considerable discussion as to how coordination could be strengthened. This resulted, inter alia, in agreement to rationalize reporting arrangements under the Quartet and to establish a Humanitarian and Emergency Policy Group as an organ of the Local Aid Coordination Committee. There was consensus between the Palestinian Authority and donors that sectoral coordination needed to be simplified in the light of the emergency and discussions on the subject have been scheduled with the new Palestinian Authority Government. Operational coordination on the field level has also been strengthened and has profited from the newly established presence of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

## **V. Challenges ahead**

### **A. Securing access and protection**

44. Since the start of the intifada, in September 2000, the issue of access continued to be of critical concern to the international aid organizations. During the reporting period, Israel placed serious obstacles in the path of the international community's efforts at effective and efficient delivery of humanitarian and emergency assistance. Access to locations within the West Bank and Gaza Strip is not afforded on a uniform and reliable basis. Entire areas are and have been inaccessible for months at a time. Fixed roadblocks and manned checkpoints delay movement and the security of staff and goods is increasingly under threat owing to disregard by Israel Defense Forces troops of the right of access and their failure to recognize the symbols of international organizations. This was most tragically exemplified by the death of UNRWA staff member Ian Hook in Jenin on 22 November 2002.

45. My Humanitarian Envoy, Ms. Bertini, during her mission in August 2002, obtained from the Government of Israel several commitments that represent a minimum and specific set of humanitarian standards. The commitments were delivered in the context of health, water, immunities commonly enjoyed by international organizations and fishing rights. Reporting on the established benchmarks shows little progress so far. Consistent delays of ambulances at checkpoints continue, with patients in critical condition facing denial of access on a regular basis and medical staff often coming under fire; localities under curfew experience difficulties in receiving water tanks; the Gaza fishing zone has not been extended to 12 nautical miles. The United Nations will continue to track Israeli adherence to and compliance with the commitments submitted to the Bertini mission.

46. In these difficult circumstances, the Task Force on Project Implementation has played a useful role in enhancing the effectiveness of donor assistance. Particularly at the operational level, there has been some improvement in obtaining mobility of national staff. Moreover, the Israeli authorities have decentralized and strengthened their liaison system throughout the West Bank and have made additional staff available to resolve incidents and coordinate movement. Despite the progress achieved, outstanding issues remain. The Task Force has been unable to engage its Israeli interlocutors in a serious policy dialogue on how to enhance access and guarantee protection of its staff and goods without endangering Israeli security. It has been equally unable to initiate a dialogue on how to enhance the movement and security of project staff and aid beneficiaries. In order to overcome these constraints, the Task Force will maintain its emphasis on a dual-level approach — policy and operational — in pursuing its mandate, but at the same time will engage high-level bodies such as the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee and the Quartet to take on access and security-related issues also.

### **B. Maintaining the development agenda**

47. Since the outbreak of the intifada, decreased revenues and severe mobility restrictions have led to a severe drop in the reliability and quality of Palestinian Authority service delivery, especially at the municipal level. Islamic welfare organizations have become relatively more important in meeting urgent needs.

Palestinian Authority ministries have been compelled to respond to the immediate humanitarian crisis, leaving little or no capacity for strategic planning. The challenge for the Palestinian Authority has been and remains to restore public confidence in national institutions, which requires reliable service delivery, while developing a more strategic outlook. Reforms under way in the financial field, moves initiated to develop a transparent national public investment strategy and the establishment of a separate Ministry for Planning are promising steps in the right direction. The challenge for donors has been and remains to balance their responsibility to respond to the immediate humanitarian needs, while continuing efforts to support long-term development and institutional capacity-building. Should a successful political process lead to the lifting of mobility and other restrictions, the economic situation could improve rapidly and the international community and the Palestinian Authority have to be ready to shift priorities quickly and accordingly. The United Nations and the donor community must explore ways in which to support Palestinian Authority planning, aid coordination, management and delivery capacity to meet immediate needs, while laying the basis for an economically viable Palestinian State, one in which the private sector can thrive as the engine of growth and internationally funded public investment is strategically deployed.

## **VI. Conclusions**

**48. In the past year, the humanitarian and socio-economic crisis in the occupied Palestinian territory reached unprecedented levels. We have seen a dramatic reduction in the capacity of Palestinians to manage their own affairs and a growing dependency upon aid — budgetary, technical and humanitarian. The challenge ahead is how to meet urgent needs without undermining — and if possible by strengthening — the prospects for a viable Palestinian State. A critical objective must be to restore the depleted administrative, financial and service delivery capacities of the Palestinian Authority, while continuing to meet emergency requirements.**

**49. Meeting the immediate challenges requires full respect by the parties for their obligations under international humanitarian law. They must make every effort to facilitate the work of United Nations agencies and partners in the donor and aid communities. I call especially upon the Government of Israel to take immediate steps to lift restrictions, to revive the economy, restore Palestinian livelihoods and facilitate the work of the assistance community, including improving the freedom of movement of aid workers and beneficiaries.**

**50. The far-reaching efforts of the donors to provide financial assistance for the humanitarian agencies and to support the Palestinian Authority's budget are to be commended and must continue. I call upon the international community to provide the necessary resources for the assistance programmes for the Palestinian people. I would draw particular attention to the latest emergency appeal of UNRWA, which provides vital services for hundreds of thousands of Palestinians.**

**51. While international assistance can alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people, only a comprehensive political settlement, which leads to the end of the occupation, can provide a real solution to the humanitarian and**

economic crisis faced by growing numbers of people in the West Bank and Gaza. Such a solution is offered in the Quartet's road map presented to the parties on 30 April, which calls for parallel steps addressing security, economic, humanitarian and political issues that will facilitate the establishment of an independent, democratic and viable State of Palestine, living side by side with Israel in peace and security.

52. The United Nations system will continue to work within the Quartet and with the donor community, as well as the parties, to achieve a political solution through the implementation of the road map and to improve the living conditions of the Palestinian people.

*Notes*

<sup>1</sup> See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 13* (A/57/13).

<sup>2</sup> See S/2003/529, annex.



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**Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations**

## Assistance to the Palestinian people

### Report of the Secretary-General\*\*\*

#### *Summary*

The past year offered new hope of a peaceful solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The Quartet, composed of the United Nations, the European Union, the Russian Federation and the United States of America, announced the Road Map for peace, spelling out concrete steps towards the fulfilment of the vision of two States, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security. Hopes were raised even further as the Israeli and Palestinian Prime Ministers committed to working towards the full implementation of the Road Map. Despite the strong commitment of the international community, the implementation of the Road Map stalled.

In an increasingly difficult humanitarian situation in the occupied Palestinian territory, United Nations agencies and programmes continue to offer a variety of types of assistance to the Palestinian people. That assistance is provided in difficult circumstances characterized by closures, curfews, incursions and other measures taken by the Israeli military that negatively affect the well-being of the Palestinian people and hamper the ability of the United Nations system to carry out its work.

The present report contains a description of efforts made by United Nations agencies, in cooperation with Palestinian and donor counterparts, to support the Palestinian civilian population and institutions.

\* A/59/50 and Corr.1.

\*\* E/2004/100.

\*\*\* The present report was submitted after the established deadline in order to include as much updated information as possible.



## **I. Introduction**

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 58/113 of 17 December 2003, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its fifty-ninth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution. The reporting period of the report is May 2003 to April 2004.

2. Information concerning the living and socio-economic conditions of the Palestinian people is provided in reports prepared by other United Nations agencies and, in particular, (a) in the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan (A/58/75-E/2003/21) and (b) in the annual report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).<sup>1</sup>

3. During the reporting period, the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority continued his efforts to support the peace process and to ensure effective coordination between the relevant institutions of the Palestinian Authority, the United Nations and the international community, as well as to document the economic and social conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory.

4. The present report describes efforts made by United Nations agencies, in cooperation with Palestinian and donor counterparts, to support the Palestinian civilian population and institutions, as described in General Assembly resolution 58/113. Also included are observations of the political climate and subsequent challenges as the international community works to end the cycle of violence and moves towards a negotiated settlement to bring peace and security to the Middle East.

## **II. Overview of the current crisis**

### **A. Political context**

5. The past year brought new hope of a peaceful solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. In April 2003, a new Palestinian Prime Minister, Mahmoud Abbas, was appointed. The Quartet, composed of the United Nations, the European Union, the Russian Federation and the United States of America, announced the Road Map towards peace, spelling out concrete steps towards the fulfilment of the vision of two States, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security. According to the Road Map, both Israelis and Palestinians must take effective and measurable steps to rebuild the shattered trust between them, end violence and start momentum towards a full and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

6. Hopes were raised even further in June 2003 as the Israeli and Palestinian Prime Ministers met with United States President George W. Bush in Aqaba, Jordan, and committed themselves to work for the full implementation of the Road Map.

The United Nations played a significant role, as its agencies continued to provide assistance to the Palestinian Authority and the Palestinian people, while the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process continued its mediating and facilitating functions, as well as its monitoring and coordinating roles. Despite the strong commitment of the international community, the implementation of the Road Map stalled.

7. Neither side honoured its commitments under the Road Map. The Israeli Government did not stop settlement activities and continued to carry out military operations in Palestinian areas, too often with deadly consequences for Palestinian civilians. The Palestinian Authority did not bring an end to violence and terrorism. It failed to reform its security apparatus according to provisions of the Road Map, leading to the resignation of the Palestinian Prime Minister in protest less than four months after he took his oath of office. In hindsight, it appears that a stronger international role in assisting the parties could have led to more effective results.

8. The construction by Israel of the barrier on Palestinian land in the West Bank introduced a new adverse element to Palestinian living conditions and freedom of movement. The impact of the barrier on Palestinian lives and the territorial integrity of a future Palestinian State are pivotal to the very idea of the two-State solution, enshrined by Security Council resolution 1397 (2002).

9. In an increasingly difficult situation, United Nations agencies and programmes continue to offer a variety of types of assistance to the Palestinian people. In carrying out my good offices, the Office of the Special Coordinator provided help to the new Prime Minister, Ahmed Qurei, and continued to engage the Israeli Government in order to reactivate the implementation of the stalled Road Map. The Security Council, in its resolution 1515 (2003), called upon both parties to fulfil their obligations under the Road Map. Unfortunately, there is still no progress towards such implementation. Israel continues to inflict daily hardship and humiliation on Palestinians, through closures, curfews, house demolitions, targeted assassinations, settlement activities, the use of deadly weapons in highly populated areas and the use of disproportionate force. Reprehensible terrorist attacks by Palestinian groups continue to visit carnage and fear on Israelis. The logic of violence, vengeance and destruction continues to prevail over the logic of dialogue and reason.

10. In February 2004, new hope was introduced when Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon announced his intention to withdraw unilaterally from the Gaza Strip and parts of the West Bank. The Quartet, at its meeting of 4 May, stated that the Gaza withdrawal initiative should lead to a full end of occupation and be consistent with the Road Map.

## **B. Humanitarian and socio-economic crisis**

11. Israel's systematic imposition of restrictions on the movement of Palestinian goods and people across borders and within the West Bank and Gaza Strip continued to be the proximate cause of the Palestinian humanitarian and economic crises. Curfews continued in 2003, although the number declined from an average of 39.18 from May to October 2002 to 7.62 from May to October 2003. However, closure remained intense in both Gaza and the West Bank, with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat recording 763 roadblocks in

January 2004, creating approximately 19 isolated pockets in the West Bank, of which 8 were enclaves and 11 were areas enclosed between the Green Line and the barrier.

12. Access to services, including water, education and health care, was severely limited because of restrictions on the movement of Palestinians. In August 2003, the World Health Organization (WHO) reported that more than 50 per cent of survey respondents had changed their health-care facility and that in 90 per cent of those cases the change was due to restriction of access. The United Nations, in its consolidated appeal for 2004, noted that local health services existed in only about 40 per cent of the affected communities in the northern part of the West Bank, while their access to secondary and tertiary health care was restricted.

13. The quality and quantity of water provided by tanker and through pipes continued to deteriorate. According to the Palestinian Water Authority, the amount supplied by Mekorot, an Israeli water company, fell in 2003, and water distribution networks were damaged by Israeli actions. The shortfall is somewhat covered by tankers, but at an estimated cost of 17 to 40 per cent of household incomes during the summer months. Studies conducted in 2003 by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in Hebron and Nablus and by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland House of Commons International Development Committee found that water from tankers increased gastrointestinal infections in children under five years of age; 69 per cent of water samples taken in July 2003 failed the WHO water standard.

14. The Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education reported that, since the beginning of the intifada, 1,289 schools had been closed because of curfews, sieges and district closures and that 282 schools had been damaged as a result of rockets, tanks and shelling. UNRWA and the Ministry both documented falling exam results, which were believed to be due to the current situation. For example, official data show that the percentage of success in grade 4 mathematics classes fell from 71.7 per cent for the academic year 2000/01 to 51.9 per cent for the academic year 2002/03.

15. A food security assessment of the West Bank and Gaza Strip undertaken in mid-2003 by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in cooperation with the World Food Programme (WFP) and UNRWA, concluded that the food security situation had considerably deteriorated over the past three years, with 4 out of 10 Palestinians now facing food insecurity. Both the quantity and quality of food consumed have fallen.

16. Data from the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics showed a weakening in the employment situation overall, with the number of persons employed declining in Gaza but slightly increasing in the West Bank. In the last quarter of 2003, the overall unemployment rate was 24.3 per cent. The rise in unemployment in Gaza resulted from increased restrictions at the Erez crossing to Israel. The World Bank estimated that gross domestic product per capita had increased by 5.9 per cent and gross national income by 7.0 per cent. Those modest improvements could be a result of a combination of the effective use of coping mechanisms by the Palestinian population, the transfer of revenues from Israel and the slight easing of restrictions on movement in the West Bank.

17. The delivery of humanitarian relief is delayed or in some cases prevented as a result of the system of closures and restrictions. UNRWA estimates that it incurred \$1.78 million in expenses as a result of extra storage and other charges on the import of basic commodities incurred between September 2000 and February 2003. Recent attacks at the Erez crossing and the use by suicide bombers of containers exiting the Karni crossing in Ashdod caused the Israel Defense Forces to impose additional restrictions on the movement of international staff, which almost resulted in United Nations agencies and programmes stopping some of their programmes. Negotiations with the Israeli military proved fruitful, and the security concerns of both Israel and the international community together were addressed to allow staff and food to continue to move.

### **C. Barrier**

18. Israel continued its construction of the barrier, part of which was being built inside the West Bank, contrary to General Assembly resolution ES-10/13 of 21 October 2003, in which it demanded that Israel stop and reverse the construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

19. On 8 December 2003, the General Assembly, by its resolution ES-10/14, requested an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences arising from the construction of the wall being built by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, considering the rules and principles of international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, and relevant Security Council and Assembly resolutions. Hearings were held from 23 to 25 February 2004, and its opinion is expected soon.

20. While Israeli authorities state that the barrier is intended to be a temporary measure to prevent suicide attacks against Israelis, it is likely to deepen the fragmentation of the West Bank and further worsen the humanitarian and socio-economic situation in the occupied Palestinian territory. In addition, the construction of the barrier could impair future political negotiations for a lasting peace. For a more detailed description of the effects of the barrier, see the report of the Secretary-General prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution ES-10/13 (A/ES-10/248).

## **III. United Nations response to the crisis**

### **A. United Nations development assistance**

21. Throughout the current reporting period, United Nations agencies in the occupied Palestinian territory found themselves seeking additional resources to meet increasing emergency needs while trying to maintain their development activities. Several development initiatives continued nonetheless, but the focus shifted even more to humanitarian aid as compared to the 2002/03 period.

#### **Institutional capacity-building**

22. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) continued to provide the Palestinian Authority and the private sector with a range of

technical assistance activities and projects, which are covered in detail in the report on UNCTAD assistance to the Palestinian people (TD/B/50/4).

23. The International Labour Organization (ILO) offered various forms of support and technical assistance, notably through assistance in the creation of an employment task force in the Palestinian Ministry of Labour through the recruitment of highly qualified professionals to enhance the efficiency and capacity of the Minister's office. It also developed a project to strengthen the Labour Market Information System.

24. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia undertook a variety of activities aimed at providing technical assistance to enhance capacity in meeting the opportunities and challenges of international trade and multilateral trade negotiations. Activities included (a) the participation of two senior officials from the Palestinian Authority in the capacity-building seminar on opportunities and challenges of tourism in ESCWA member States, held in December 2003, (b) a workshop in June 2003 on key issues on the international economic agenda, held jointly by ESCWA and UNCTAD, (c) a workshop on negotiation skills and dispute resolution of shared water resources, held in December 2003, and (d) as a follow-up to that workshop, a training course on negotiation skills and dispute resolution of shared water resources organized for Palestinian delegates in Amman in March 2004.

25. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) allotted \$235,500 to 460 schools to provide a better learning environment by fostering the decentralization process, encouraging community participation and ensuring direct impact. It also supported the Ministry of Education and Higher Education in the preparation of the draft education for all national action plan. In addition, the Ministry received UNESCO support in the field of technical and vocational education and training through an informal group established to facilitate the coordination and exchange of information. Eight ministry officials went on a study tour to Jordan to learn about new and innovative approaches and techniques in early childhood care and education. Finally, UNESCO supported the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities in its efforts to elaborate the first draft of the Palestinian law for cultural and natural heritage.

26. The Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), recognizing that shelter and human settlements were key elements in reaching a sustainable peace in the Middle East, endorsed, in its resolution 19/18 of 9 May 2003, the establishment of a special human settlements programme for the Palestinian people and a technical cooperation trust fund of \$5 million for an initial period of two years. The objectives of the programme include institutional capacity-building and strengthening of coordination mechanisms, promotion of affordable financing for housing, enhancement of the capacity of research institutions, provision of support for the development of a Palestinian human settlements policy and establishment of an institutional framework for Geographic Information Systems. The Governing Council urged the international donor community and all financial institutions to support UN-Habitat in the immediate mobilization of financial resources towards the establishment and operation of the programme and the fund. To date, contributions to the trust fund have been made by the Governments of the United States (\$500,000) and Sweden (\$275,000).

27. The International Atomic Energy Agency focused primarily on the provision of technical assistance through a total disbursement of \$222,323 supporting a variety of initiatives, including on area-wide application of the sterile insect technique for medfly control, radiation safety infrastructure, human resources development and feasibility study for a central radiotherapy facility.

#### **Human resources and social development**

28. Education was the largest area of activity for UNRWA, with expenditure of \$88.4 million planned for regular services provided in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Emphasis was placed on the Agency's 272 elementary and preparatory schools and vocational and technical training centres in the occupied Palestinian territory, which accommodated a combined total of 252,250 pupils and provided, inter alia, a first university degree to 632 trainees during the same period.

29. Through its continued support of "better skills for a better future" and "workers' vocational education and training" programmes, ILO provided four computer labs in Jenin, Ramallah, Hebron and Khan Younis, and more than 500 women and men completed various computer-training courses.

30. With a planned expenditure of \$30 million for regular health-care services and programmes, UNRWA operated 51 health facilities that provided comprehensive primary health care and disease prevention and control, dental care, maternal and child health care and family-planning services. In its attempt to better meet the environmental needs of the Palestinian people, UNRWA also provided for sewage disposal, management of storm-water runoff, safe drinking water, the collection and disposal of refuse and the control of insect and rodent infestation.

31. WHO continued to implement and develop projects to promote the health of all Palestinian people, including obtaining, collecting and interpreting health information; improving the impact of health interventions through coordination; maximizing health through up-to-date technical guidance; improving access to humanitarian assistance and health supplies and promoting a context for health and humanitarian action. It leads the "health operation room", which aims to support the decision-making capacities of the Health Sector Working Group and focuses on consolidating data on health, health sector activities and facilities and on the availability of medical supplies. The forum regularly reports on the current humanitarian situation and on the ongoing networking with local and international stakeholders. Reports on restrictions of access to health-care services at the checkpoints as well as the proactive search for urgent needs and appeals of the health sector have been systematically published. Maps of health-care facilities in the West Bank and Gaza were produced.

32. WHO supports the Ministry of Health in formulating and implementing national health policy in accordance with the principles of equity and sustainability and advocates for health to be considered as a top national priority. WHO is committed to keeping the lines of communication open between Palestinian and Israeli health professionals, non-governmental organizations and health institutions. It aims to create platforms for dialogue and to advocate for open discussion and cooperation. Newsletters, training and research activities and the establishment and initiation of a discussion forum on key health issues between professionals on both sides are ongoing initiatives, together with a partnership among cities.

33. During the reporting period, most of the activities of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) shifted towards development components that addressed emerging needs. For example, the Fund provided a consultant to assist the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics in producing its survey on the impact of the barrier on the Palestinian population. It also proposed training service providers and women's groups to deal with gender-based violence.

34. The WFP caseload consists of 553,000 of the most vulnerable persons in the non-refugee population and falls into two categories: "special hardship cases", as defined by the Palestinian Ministry of Social Affairs, and the "new poor" — people who used to work in Israel and the settlements and have been unemployed for a minimum of six months, including Bedouins, farmers and fishermen in the Gaza Strip. In 2003, WFP began a supplementary feeding programme for 6,145 malnourished children and their families located in the Gaza Strip and the southern part of the West Bank, and provided food assistance to 10,000 elderly and disabled persons and orphans residing in social institutions. The programme provided approximately 11,000 tons of food to the International Committee of the Red Cross to assist 180,000 hardship cases and long-term unemployed in the rural areas of the West Bank. Of the total caseload, 157,000 "new poor" received food under the food for work/food for training modality. A total of 26,000 beneficiaries participated in those projects, with one person per household taking part and receiving a monthly family ration of 102 kilograms of food per month in exchange.

#### **Human rights and women**

35. The activities of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) focused on the institutional legal framework, the administration of justice, the strengthening of national institutions and human rights education. Its efforts culminated in seven specific projects that resulted in the provision of training and technical assistance to 203 individuals. The "assisting communities together" project supported grass-roots initiatives for the promotion and protection of human rights by means of small grant projects provided jointly by OHCHR and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

36. The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) continued its efforts to increase the participation of Palestinian women in social, economic and political life, to encourage compliance with international human rights standards and, in particular, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and to improve the situation of women under the current circumstances. As part of that endeavour, UNIFEM conducted preliminary assessments of existing United Nations programmes on women in development and gender and development to highlight gaps and avoid duplication of efforts. A new pilot project due in May 2004 was to use community centres established by United Nations agencies and programmes throughout the occupied Palestinian territory for the advancement of women in the area.

#### **Infrastructure and natural resources management**

37. To build on the successful projects of previous years, UNDP helped to establish the Palestinian Energy Centre, which will serve as a driving force for energy efficiency improvements and greenhouse gas reduction. UNDP and the Global Environment Facility continued to work together to preserve the wetlands in

the Gaza Strip. A total of \$1.7 million was devoted to a storm-water drainage system in Khan Younis to alleviate damage caused by flooding. Many UNDP efforts continued to focus on the upgrading of strategic infrastructure to meet urgent needs, including the rehabilitation and upgrading of the Jericho border crossing in the West Bank and the Rafah and Karni crossings in Gaza, where thousands of people cross every day.

### **Productive sectors**

38. In its efforts to generate much-needed economic and rural development, UNDP allocated approximately \$9 million in financial support to various initiatives aimed at land reclamation and integrated rural development. UNDP also continued its work on an innovative project to improve the economic stability of the Bedouin communities in the West Bank and to revitalize the handicraft industry in the Bethlehem district. Technical assistance and infrastructure support provided to local governments in microregions will continue to expand under the local rural development programme and the community services programme.

39. During the current reporting period, ILO worked to create a Small Business Advocacy, Training and Demand-Driven Services Unit at the Federation of Palestinian Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture. Building on its work surrounding the Palestinian Fund for Employment and Social Protection, it also allocated from its own resources \$1 million to cover the cost of the physical establishment of the Fund and to implement pilot activities within that framework of that institution.

40. The UNRWA microfinance and microenterprise programme has supplied 66,300 loans to the Palestinian people worth \$73.6 million since 1991. As the banks and other financial service providers have closed their lending to all but the most robust businesses, the UNRWA programme has remained one of the few credit facilities continuing to serve the financial needs of the small business sector in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Throughout the crisis, it has adapted its lending instruments to meet the needs of the poorest enterprises. The programme was able to maintain its credit activities; however, like other businesses, it was unable to meet its operational costs. While the programme disbursed 12,000 loans worth \$13.8 million in 2000, in 2003 it increased its lending to 12,324 loans valued at just \$8.8 million.

41. ESCWA is organizing an Arab-international forum on socio-economic rehabilitation and development in the occupied Palestinian territory: towards an independent State, in September 2004 pursuant to two resolutions adopted by ESCWA member States at their 2001 and 2003 sessions, which called for the rehabilitation of the economic sectors in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. As part of the preparatory process for the forum, a consultative meeting was held in Beirut on 29 and 30 July 2003 to discuss the goals, agenda and format of the forum.

## **B. United Nations system emergency focus**

### **Support to social sectors**

42. Needs during the present reporting period outpaced donor contributions.



### *Food*

43. According to UNRWA, the quantity of food distributed in 2003 was reduced by approximately one third compared with previous appeals, with food parcels covering only 40 per cent of the nutritional needs of the population. Likewise, assistance for 70,000 schoolchildren was cancelled and selective cash assistance was cut in both fields. Reductions in the emergency rehousing programme resulted in a funding shortfall for more than 1,100 dwelling units by the end of the year. Of the \$9.2 million required for the emergency health programme during 2003, only \$1.3 million was available.

44. There were some important successes. Statistics showed that despite cuts, UNRWA food assistance provided to some 217,500 families through the emergency food aid programme helped to stem, to some extent, the increase in malnutrition in refugee camps. In addition, food distribution targeting some 127,500 families in Gaza and 90,000 in the West Bank continued during the reporting period.

45. In July 2003, WFP launched a one-year emergency operation through the Palestinian Authority and non-governmental organizations. In the first phase of the operation, WFP also continued to provide food to the International Committee of the Red Cross to assist 180,000 non-refugees in the rural areas of the West Bank until December 2003. The operation brought vital assistance to 530,000 food-insecure Palestinian non-refugees in Gaza and the West Bank, representing 15 per cent of the total population and 26 per cent of the non-refugee population.

### *Health*

46. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) directly provided vaccines and immunization for 384,000 children and 100,000 women in cooperation with the Ministry of Health. During the period under review, UNRWA continued fielding mobile clinics, strengthening the capacity of the system with regard to emergency and casualty care, including at Qalqilya hospital, recruiting additional staff to handle increased workloads and replacing staff unable to report to work owing to closures and curfews, providing ambulance services and post-injury medical rehabilitation and providing psycho-social counselling for children and youth traumatized by exposure to Israeli military operations.

47. In response to the limited and restricted access to health-care services, UNFPA conducted community health-care training for professionals in isolated localities and produced more than \$200,000 worth of commodities and supplies for safe motherhood and delivery. The Fund also provided laboratory equipment to the Hebron Women's Health Centre and contributed to the rehabilitation of Dar-Al Shifa delivery ward. WHO responded to the emergency by sending approximately \$400,000 worth of specific items, such as medical equipment and supplies and health emergency kits. In addition, rodenticides and pesticides were delivered to the Ministry of Health in order to prevent public health problems.

### *Employment*

48. By the end of 2003, over 4 million days of employment had been offered by UNRWA since the inception of the emergency employment programme in January 2001, benefiting thousands of wage earners and their dependants. In addition to restoring essential purchasing power to their families, these temporary employees,

who include construction workers, food distribution labourers, sanitation workers, teachers and medical staff, augmented the Agency's emergency assistance programme by helping to build tangible assets for the refugee community. Those assets included expansion and repair of refugee camp infrastructure and renovation of Agency schools and health clinics.

#### *Education*

49. UNICEF took part in initiatives in education, such as a "back-to-school" campaign to ensure that 1 million Palestinian children went to and remained in school. Also, in curfew-prone areas, UNICEF supported the provision of remedial education to children to compensate for their lost school days. Jointly with UNFPA, UNICEF supported the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics in carrying out the First National Youth Survey in the occupied Palestinian territory and provided more than 50,000 children and adolescents an opportunity to participate in summer camps. UNICEF assisted the Palestinian Authority in drafting the Palestinian child rights law, which is based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

50. Although it is viewed as a key development sector, the education sector found itself in need of immediate emergency assistance throughout the reporting period. As part of its emergency operations, UNRWA attempted to address the challenges to its educational programmes by conducting remedial classes in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. While providing classes for more than 38,000 students in the first half of 2003, the programme was suspended in the Gaza Strip due to funding shortfalls. In June 2003, 158 remedial education teachers were assigned to UNRWA schools in the West Bank, where a total of 4,354 students were enrolled in remedial classes in Arabic and another 4,482 in mathematics classes. Finally, UNFPA worked with teachers and school counsellors on dealing with children's psychological well-being.

#### **Coordination of humanitarian assistance**

51. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has been serving as a coordinating body for United Nations funding appeals and as a resource for decision makers and operational organizations to assist the humanitarian response in the occupied Palestinian territory. Field offices throughout the West Bank and Gaza regularly hold local coordination meetings and, at the central level, the Office has been acting as secretariat to the operational and policy coordination bodies of the United Nations system on humanitarian affairs.

#### **Information on access restrictions and humanitarian needs**

52. The Government of Israel's fulfilment of its commitment to allow movement of humanitarian organizations and ambulances operating in the West Bank and Gaza (the "Bertini commitments") was monitored by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs each month. By using maps and satellite imagery to show how roadblocks, checkpoints, earth mounds ditches and the barrier restrict movement throughout the occupied Palestinian territory, the Office analysed the impact of those restrictions on the humanitarian situation. Analysis of those data showed a clear relationship between political or security developments and the severity of access restrictions.

53. The Office also observed the construction of the barrier, recording land confiscations and construction, monitoring the operation of gates in the barrier and analysing the barrier's effect on Palestinian communities. It also published comprehensive data each week on civilian casualties, curfews, house demolitions, land confiscations, checkpoints and other movement restrictions.

#### **Infrastructure support**

54. The pressure on the infrastructure within the occupied Palestinian territory is mounting as a result of the rapidly growing needs and physical damage caused through Israeli military incursions. A number of United Nations agencies directed their efforts at addressing those needs, with moderate success.

55. Three months after the Israel Defence Forces' incursion into the Jenin refugee camp in April 2002, UNRWA concluded a \$26.7 million grant agreement to rehabilitate the camp. Further incursions since the conclusion of the grant agreement resulted in damage to still more housing units; by the end of the first quarter of 2003, a total of 613 homes had been damaged. Repairs to those homes were paid for by contributions to UNRWA emergency assistance programmes.

56. In 2003, UNRWA offered financial assistance totalling \$355,117 to 35 families in the West Bank (excluding Jenin) to reconstruct homes that had been destroyed. Financial assistance amounting to \$48,865 went to another 14 families whose homes had sustained major structural damage. A total of 1,678 families received grants totalling \$418,340 to make minor repairs to their homes.

57. As a result of such coordination by UNRWA, contracts for the road, water, storm-water drainage, and sewerage networks were signed on 8 September 2003 and work is ongoing. A contract for the electrical network was signed on 15 December. Further emergency assistance was provided through UNDP and its "development of social and municipal infrastructure" initiative, which is directed at the tiling and maintenance of sidewalks, the restoration of public buildings (schools, health clinics), the rehabilitation of water and drainage lines and the removal of solid waste.

58. UNRWA targeted the social infrastructure needs through its Field Engineering and Construction Services Department in Jerusalem as it completed the detailed designs of a school, a women's programme centre, a kindergarten and a community and youth centre, with construction scheduled for March 2005. Likewise, UNDP targeted agricultural infrastructure needs through projects aimed at land reclamation, construction and rehabilitation of cisterns and agricultural roads. Also, through cooperation with USAID, the "Tashgil" project, designed to create jobs by developing and improving social and agricultural infrastructure, continued its operations.

#### **Support to productive sectors**

59. Emergency support focused primarily on agriculture, with FAO including an agricultural and food component within its consolidated appeal comprising five project proposals budgeted for a total amount of \$4,260,000, including the rehabilitation of destroyed and damaged greenhouses and damaged irrigation infrastructure.

### **C. United Nations system assistance to the most vulnerable communities**

60. The call to address the urgent needs of cities and villages affected by the barrier came as part of the UNDP strategic approach to poverty alleviation, which focuses on providing assistance to the most vulnerable communities. In addition to communities most affected by the construction of the barrier in the West Bank, those efforts included assistance in emergency employment generation to the areas of Rafah, Khan Younis and Beit Hanoun in the Gaza Strip, all of which had experienced excessive damage to infrastructure and rising poverty owing to continued incursions and encirclement by the Israeli forces. UNDP also launched a programme to provide urgently needed water supplies to isolated areas through the provision of over 40 water tanker trucks.

61. As part of its efforts to address the most vulnerable communities of the occupied Palestinian territory, WFP identified five different levels of vulnerability, as defined in the 2003 food security assessment conducted in the West Bank and Gaza by FAO and WFP. WFP prioritized the most vulnerable through its vulnerability analysis and mapping system, which makes use of new assessment and food security monitoring methodologies, such as the pair-wise ranking analysis, the coping strategies index and the physical access module. FAO contributed to the assistance of vulnerable communities through its food insecurity and vulnerability information and mapping system.

62. The UNDP programme of assistance to the Palestinian people supported a number of counselling centres as well as a number of youth organizations to help young people cope with the violent environment.

### **D. United Nations consolidated appeal**

63. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs coordinated the drafting of the consolidated appeals process for 2004, designed in consultation with the Palestinian Authority and published in November 2003, in which \$305 million was requested to implement the current humanitarian plan of action. The consolidated appeals process report provides a comprehensive overview of humanitarian needs in the occupied Palestinian territory. The Office began its mid-year review of the consolidated appeals process early in 2004, which is intended to help agencies adjust their assistance programmes if needs have changed.

### **E. Millennium Development Goals**

64. The UNDP programme of assistance to the Palestinian people released its first report on the status of the Millennium Development Goals in the occupied Palestinian territory. Although the setting of baselines and numerical time-bound targets is designed to enhance the opportunity for development, the impact of the intifada countered those efforts, thereby dramatically hindering the process. Ultimately, the report should be seen as a step, in partnership with the leadership of the Palestinian Authority, towards setting out a national framework for action towards the achievement of the goals outlined in the Millennium Declaration.

## **IV. Donor response to the crisis**

### **A. Emergency support**

#### **Budgetary support**

65. The fiscal situation in the West Bank and Gaza remained difficult in the last eight months of 2003 despite some positive developments. With the resumption of the monthly transfers of clearance revenue by Israel and increased collection efforts by the Palestinian Authority since the beginning of the year, total budgetary revenues exceeded the full-year budget estimates by about \$160 million.

66. The wage bill continued to grow throughout the year, reaching \$75 million in December, with the monthly average of \$61 million surpassing the 2003 budget estimate of \$53 million. The gap was due to the increase in employment of civil service and security staff, as well as to the implementation of the civil service law in the last quarter of 2003, which required on average a 15 per cent increase in civil service wages. Moreover, the Palestinian Authority had to pay, on behalf of municipalities, utility charges that were owed to Israeli companies.

67. Overall, the annual current fiscal balance was very close to that which was budgeted, but the liquidity situation became precarious at the end of the year because of a significant shortfall in external budgetary support, which was less than half the budgeted amount, mainly because of shortfalls in contributions. Consequently, throughout 2003 the Palestinian Authority increased its indebtedness to domestic banks. In addition, while substantial arrears were repaid to the private sector by using the lower than expected withheld clearance revenues released by Israel in 2003, new arrears were accumulated towards the end of the year and December salaries were paid with some delays. With Palestinian Authority net borrowing from banks exceeding its credit limits as set by banks, salaries are likely to be paid with increasing delay unless external resources are quickly obtained.

#### **Non-budgetary support**

68. At the December 2003 Rome meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee made up of the leading donors to the Palestinians, the Palestinian Authority requested \$650 million in support, including \$154 million for humanitarian and social assistance, \$26 million for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of damage, \$278 million for public infrastructure development, \$40 million for private sector support and \$390 million for reform and institutional capacity-building. The World Bank-administered trust fund, established at that meeting and designed to mobilize the needed external support, should be operational shortly.

### **B. Support for reform of the Palestinian Authority**

69. The Task Force on Palestinian Reform, established by the Quartet in July 2002 in response to the publication of the 100-day Palestinian reform plan, continued to monitor and support the implementation of Palestinian civil reforms and guide the international donor community in its assistance for the Palestinian reform agenda. Significant technical and programmatic donor support in all reform areas continued to be forthcoming. The Task Force worked with Palestinians to update the Palestinian reform action plan, which, on a continuing basis, highlights Palestinian

commitments, reviews benchmarks, identifies obstacles to reform and proposes areas for donor assistance. The Task Force conducted its activities through seven reform support groups in the areas of elections, financial accountability, judicial and rule of law reform, legislative reform, market economics, local government and public administration and civil service reform.

70. At its meeting held in Rome on 11 December 2003, the Task Force on Palestinian Reform noted that Palestinian internal political instability, continued Israeli restrictions on freedom of movement and the significant deterioration of the security context and Palestinian-Israeli relations all contributed to paralysis and delay in the reform process. While expressing concern that the reform process had been largely stalled over the previous four months, it nonetheless welcomed the considerable progress made in several areas of Palestinian civil reform, in particular the implementation of significantly higher standards of fiscal transparency and accountability, as well as work towards the development of the public institutions and laws needed to promote a market economy. The Palestinian efforts to establish a centrally coordinated and proactive approach to reform through the Palestinian Authority Reform Coordination Support Unit under the auspices of the Prime Minister, as well as the establishment of the Palestinian National Reform Committee, composed of representatives from the government, the legislature, the business community and civil society, were also commended as positive steps towards developing a more comprehensive reform agenda.

71. In its progress report of February 2004, the Task Force on Palestinian Reform continued to express disappointment at the overall pace of the reform effort. It noted that significant measures had been adopted, such as the passing by the Palestinian Legislative Council of the 2004 budget, the start of voter registration and the important decision to pay the salaries of all security personnel through bank transfers. However, it observed that a real political commitment by both parties was still lacking and was hampering progress in many areas, especially in the judicial and legislative fields.

### **C. Donor coordination**

72. The Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of International Assistance to Palestinians met in Rome on 10 December 2003. This was an early opportunity for members of the newly appointed cabinet of Prime Minister Ahmed Qurei to engage in a high-level multilateral discussion. The Palestinian Authority submitted an integrated budget for 2004 as well as a detailed socio-economic stabilization plan for 2004-2005, both of which illustrated positive efforts by the Authority. Israeli Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom outlined his Government's agenda — an Israeli proposal to help create employment opportunities for Palestinians by establishing industrial estates in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, setting up commercial centres close to the Green Line and enhancing cross-border economic cooperation and trade.

73. During the meeting, the donor community voiced concerns over the critical economic and humanitarian situation in the Palestinian territory and ongoing impediments to the delivery of aid to the Palestinian people. Donors also stressed the need for further reforms within the Palestinian Authority and for tangible progress by both parties on the political and economic fronts. Their attention was

drawn to the budget shortfall of approximately \$650 million, which, if left unfunded, was likely to jeopardize the Authority's fiscal position and capacity for service delivery very early in 2004.

74. Coordination mechanisms continued on the ground in the form of the all-donor Local Aid Coordination Committee chaired by the Office of the Special Coordinator, the Norwegian Representative Office and the World Bank for overall donor coordination, the Task Force on Project Implementation composed of the Office of the Special Coordinator, the European Commission, the World Bank and USAID, and the Humanitarian Emergency Policy Group, which comprises a larger group of donors. For each of those bodies, much effort was spent addressing access issues, the impact of the barrier and the Palestinian Authority fiscal situation.

## **V. Challenges ahead**

### **A. Political challenge**

75. As bleak as the current circumstances are, it is important that the international community continue to act with determination to move forward and again strive for a lasting and comprehensive peace. The Palestinian Authority must reform its own security apparatus, as required by the Road Map, and show determination to act decisively on the ground in order to end the use of violence. The Government of Israel must halt all actions encroaching upon the territorial rights of the Palestinians and strictly observe the provisions of international law in its conduct as an occupying Power. The international community continues to stand by its Road Map and the goals stipulated in it. Security Council resolutions 1397 (2002) and 1515 (2003) are reflections of that staunch commitment. The United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process continues to work with the parties to restart the peace process.

76. The announced intention of Israel to withdraw unilaterally from the Gaza Strip and parts of the West Bank could create an opportunity for a resumption of a meaningful peace process. But for that to happen, the Israeli withdrawal must be complete, consistent with the Road Map and with similar steps taken in the West Bank and coordinated with the international community and the Palestinian Authority. The latter must take this opportunity to foster security, rebuild political control and revive the Palestinian economy. The international community must demonstrate a forceful and committed engagement, including through a presence on the ground, to ensure incremental progress. United Nations agencies, in collaboration with other donors, should also be prepared to play a leading role in assisting in rebuilding the shattered Palestinian economy. Arab States should also play their part by responding with positive gestures. Only through the combination of efforts by all the parties, assisted by the international community, can the current bleak situation be altered and a more peaceful future pursued.

### **B. Securing access and protection**

77. The continued restrictions in movement have become so integrated into the daily lives of the Palestinian people that their negative effects can no longer be quickly reversed, even if all closure measures are removed in the near future.

Throughout the reporting period, the international community has attempted to engage the Government of Israel at various levels in a policy and operational dialogue to address Israel's security concerns while ensuring the minimum requirements for effective and efficient aid delivery.

78. It is widely expected that the restrictions will remain in place in 2004. With the coping mechanisms employed by the Palestinian civilian population being exhausted and the international community being unable to respond, and in some cases reducing or ceasing some of their operations as a result, the negative social and economic effects will be even greater in 2004 than they were in 2003. Only a resolution of this issue as part of a political process will ease the conditions of the Palestinian people.

### **C. Responding to needs still unmet**

79. While many United Nations agencies place their primary focus on various development and emergency response initiatives, considerable attention is also being focused on the ever-growing sector of "unmet needs".

80. Despite its efforts, FAO has categorized its initiative to support the coordination of food security and agricultural emergency and rehabilitation interventions as an unmet needs project that still requires further development. Support for backyard vegetable and small-stock production projects in the most vulnerable communities is another initiative coordinated by FAO, which has yet to achieve its final goals. To address further unmet needs, FAO will support the Ministry of Agriculture's efforts to rehabilitate irrigated farming systems through a variety of proposed measures.

81. Through its assessment procedures, UNCTAD has identified several areas as "priority needs still unmet" and has provided accompanying proposals for responding to them. A joint UNCTAD-ILO project is proposed to build Palestinian capacity in the area of economic policy formulation and design of development strategies based on quantitative modelling techniques. It is hoped that this project will be the final step required for the provision of an integrated framework for macroeconomic, trade and labour policy analysis. Building on UNCTAD expertise, it is hoped that sustainable food security for small farmers can be addressed by promoting a financing mechanism for farmers' export activities, providing access to international market information and channels, providing international trade finance facilities and developing plans for storage and other trade facilities. All of these initiatives are designed to promote much-needed food security through international commodity trade.

82. In its new country programme, which began in January 2004, UNICEF will draw on lessons learned in 2003 in its efforts to address areas identified as unmet needs. Current assessment results have identified the following areas as priorities: (a) increasing efforts to ensure that all Palestinian children have access to high-quality and uninterrupted education; (b) contributing towards maintaining the health status of women and children; (c) expanding child protection components to better address increasing violence and develop more conducive environments for child growth and development; and (d) promoting the participation and development of adolescents.



83. As part of the report of the Executive Director on the implementation of Commission on Human Settlements resolution 18/12 (HSP/GC/19/2/Add.3), UN-Habitat describes the key priority areas of housing challenges facing Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territory and outlines suggested actions for addressing them. The following areas are identified as priority areas of concern: institutional capacity of the Palestinian Authority and municipal authorities; finance for low-cost housing; shelter delivery systems and coordination mechanisms; monitoring and analysis; and shelter policy.

84. Unmet needs that UNDP considers to be of the highest priority are emergency assistance to communities affected by the barrier, reform of Palestinian Authority institutions and employment generation. UNDP plans to continue to work to mobilize additional funds to meet emergency needs and to alleviate the hardships faced by communities affected by the barrier, as well as to carry out its ongoing reform projects as described above.

## **VI. Observations**

85. **In last year's report (A/58/88-E/2003/84 and Corr.1) referred to the reduction in the capacity of Palestinians to function effectively and a growing dependency upon aid — budgetary, technical and humanitarian. This trend continues, and the significance of the United Nations agencies and their role in the occupied Palestinian territory has never been greater — nor has there ever been a time when it has been more difficult to operate.**

86. **A two-track strategy — balancing emergency needs against development goals that support a viable Palestinian Authority, has been the basis of the United Nations approach for the past three years. Although less than preferable, it has become the modus operandi for relief efforts in the occupied Palestinian territory. As a result of their considerable efforts, the United Nations system and donors have achieved measured success in both emergency and development assistance. Unfortunately, those successes have been overshadowed by the escalation of the crisis, which has led not only to loss of life, but also to a reversal in the progress made in the socio-economic sectors.**

87. **Humanitarian and financial assistance will not by themselves serve as a solution to the political crisis affecting the lives of the Palestinians and Israelis. A solution regarding the status of the Palestinian people, as well as the economic situation and humanitarian crisis, is linked directly to respect for international law and the achievement of a peaceful resolution of the conflict.**

88. **As a matter of priority, the Government of Israel must ease restrictions and work closely with United Nations agencies, donors and humanitarian organizations to ensure that aid and development projects are delivered in a timely and comprehensive manner. Effective steps by the Palestinian Authority to lessen Israel's security concerns would facilitate such an effort. The international community must not lose its focus despite the challenges; I draw particular attention to the latest emergency appeal of UNRWA.**

89. **The events of the past year have demonstrated how desperately the people of the Middle East need a political solution to their long conflict. There will be no peace unless each of the parties, the region and the wider international**

**community is ready to play its part. To this end, the Quartet and others are making a concerted effort to engage the parties in a political process through negotiations that would ultimately bring an end to the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory that began in 1967. Only then can the suffering of the Palestinians, and of Israelis, be alleviated. The United Nations system will continue to carry out its work in support of that goal.**

*Notes*

<sup>1</sup> *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 13 and corrigendum and addendum (A/58/13 and Corr.1 and Add.1).*

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# General Assembly Economic and Social Council

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**General Assembly  
Sixtieth session  
Item 74 (d) of the preliminary list\*  
Strengthening of the coordination of  
humanitarian and disaster relief assistance  
of the United Nations, including special  
economic assistance**

**Economic and Social Council  
Substantive session of 2005  
Item 9 of the provisional agenda\*\*  
Implementation of the Declaration  
on the Granting of Independence to  
Colonial Countries and Peoples by  
the specialized agencies and the  
international institutions associated  
with the United Nations**

## Assistance to the Palestinian people

### Report of the Secretary-General\*\*\*

#### *Summary*

The year under review was marked by the announcement of Israel's disengagement plan from the Gaza Strip and parts of the northern West Bank, the death of Palestinian President Arafat, successful Palestinian presidential elections and cautious efforts towards a resumption of the peace process by both the Israelis and Palestinians, in spite of continued violence, which claimed lives on both sides. Internal and external closures and other measures taken by the Israeli military, although moderately alleviated towards the end of the reporting period, continued to create economic hardship for Palestinians and restrict the delivery of necessary emergency aid supplies.

While the humanitarian situation required that emergency assistance remain the priority throughout the year, United Nations agencies took steps in their programming, through technical support and capacity-building initiatives, to assist the Palestinian Authority in its efforts to refocus on longer term planning and improved governance at both the central and the municipal level.

The present report contains a description of efforts made by United Nations agencies, in cooperation with Palestinian and donor counterparts, to support the Palestinian civilian population and institutions.

\* A/60/50 and Corr.1.

\*\* E/2005/100.

\*\*\* The present report was submitted after the established deadline in order to include as much updated information as possible.

## **I. Introduction**

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 59/56 of 2 December 2004, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its sixtieth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution. The reporting period was from May 2004 to April 2005.

2. Information on the living and socio-economic conditions of the Palestinian people is provided in reports prepared by other United Nations agencies and, in particular, (a) in the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan (A/59/89-E/2004/21); (b) in the annual report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) (A/59/13); and (c) in the report of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs entitled "Gaza on the Edge" on the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip (October 2004).

3. Throughout the year, the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority continued his efforts to support the peace process and to ensure effective coordination between the Palestinian Authority, the United Nations, the international community and the Government of Israel, as well as to document the economic and social conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory.

## **II. Overview of the current situation**

### **Political context**

4. The Israeli disengagement plan was announced in February 2004. The initiative to withdraw from the Gaza Strip and parts of the northern West Bank was welcomed by the international community, which, however, emphasized the need for coordination with the Palestinian Authority and the Middle East Quartet, and for implementation to take place in full compliance with the provisions of the road map. The Quartet expressed its support for the initiative in its statement on 4 May 2004.

5. The United Nations continued calling for the full implementation of the road map, endorsed by Security Council resolution 1515 (2003), and the realization of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East through the full implementation of resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 1397 (2002) and 1515 (2003). The Organization urged the parties to utilize the disengagement plan as a first step in returning to full negotiations. Despite the unilateral character of the plan and concerns over its economic consequences, the international community worked with both parties to ensure that Israel's withdrawal would proceed in a manner that would contribute to the reinvigoration of the Palestinian economy and a revival of the peace process.

6. Following the election of Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) as Palestinian President and the formation of a new Israeli Government in January 2005, both

sides took positive steps that raised hopes for change in the region. The parties held a summit meeting between President Abbas and Prime Minister Sharon in Sharm el-Sheikh on 8 February 2005. At the meeting, both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to the road map and agreed to end all violence and military activity against each other's people.

7. The implementation of the understandings reached at Sharm el-Sheikh did not proceed without difficulties and delays. Both sides frequently reaffirmed their commitment to coordinate the implementation of the Israeli disengagement plan, though progress remained slow until April 2005. In this context, in April 2005 the Quartet appointed outgoing World Bank President James Wolfensohn as its special envoy to oversee and coordinate the international community's efforts in support of the disengagement initiative, as well as to promote coordination and cooperation between the parties in this regard. The special envoy is to play a specific role in the methodology of withdrawal, the disposition of assets, and the envisaged post-withdrawal revival of the Palestinian economy, including investment and financing.

#### *Humanitarian and socio-economic context*

8. Overall, macroeconomic indicators for the occupied Palestinian territory showed that the economy was resilient, despite the pressures of ongoing conflict and closure. Gross domestic product growth, estimated at 3 per cent, remained positive for the second year running, though lower than in 2003. In 2004, for the first time, domestic public revenues exceeded budget projections. However, despite this positive picture, a climate of protracted social and humanitarian crisis endured through the year, punctuated by an intensification of the conflict, ongoing barrier construction and persistent fiscal crisis. Private investment, particularly in productive sectors, remained low due to an ongoing lack of confidence of potential investors in the political situation.

9. An estimated 48 per cent of Palestinians were living below the poverty line at the end of 2004, with poverty rates expected to rise if prevailing conditions persist.<sup>1</sup> Food insecurity declined slightly in 2003, affecting 37 per cent of Palestinians.<sup>2</sup> Overall, however, food consumption per capita has fallen by 25 to 30 per cent since September 2000. In general, there is greater dependence on external aid in the Gaza Strip than in the West Bank. Humanitarian assistance constituted the chief part of the household food basket in the Gaza Strip, whereas in the West Bank employment and casual labour were the main sources of household income and food.

10. Israeli restrictions on movement were a proximate cause of economic hardship among ordinary Palestinians. The restrictions became more severe in the Gaza Strip, where the conflict intensified during 2004. The Rafah crossing was closed for 86 days during the reporting period, severely disrupting the flow of people and goods to and from Gaza. The average number of daily workers in 2004 entering the Erez industrial zone dropped by 75 per cent against 2003, and the number of those crossing Erez to work in Israel dropped by 64 per cent. This decline in labour access from Gaza was a major factor in overall Palestinian unemployment, which reached 26.9 per cent in 2004.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, there was an increasing trend towards under-18 child labour, particularly in the Gaza Strip and the barrier-affected communities of the West Bank.<sup>4</sup> It is important to note, however, that the total number of workers entering Israel and crossing into the Erez industrial zone began to increase significantly as of mid-February 2005.

11. Imports from Israel, through the main commercial terminal between the Gaza Strip and Israel at Karni rose by 5 per cent, though exports dropped by 30 per cent in 2004 compared with 2003. During the first quarter of 2005, imports through Karni declined by 18 per cent and exports by 39 per cent compared with the same quarter in 2004.<sup>5</sup> Internal checkpoints restricted movement between the northern, central and southern parts of the Gaza Strip. The barrier, together with more than 700 roadblocks, disrupted the flow of goods and people within the West Bank, as well as to and from Israel. The Allenby bridge remained the only international crossing for West Bank Palestinians.

12. On 9 July 2004, the International Court of Justice rendered an advisory opinion pursuant to General Assembly resolution ES-10/14 of 8 December 2003. The opinion stated that the construction of the wall “constitutes breaches by Israel of several of its obligations under the applicable international humanitarian law and human rights instruments”. On 20 July 2004, the General Assembly adopted resolution ES-10/15, which acknowledged the Court’s advisory opinion, demanded that Israel comply with its legal obligations and called on all Member States to comply as well. The resolution also requested the Secretary-General to establish a register of barrier-related damages. The register is expected to be established later in 2005.

13. Israel continued its construction of the barrier in the West Bank, contrary to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice of 9 July 2004 and General Assembly resolutions ES-10/13 and ES-10/15. By early 2005, the barrier was approximately 205 km long, of which 24.1 km consisted of concrete slabs and 181 km was fence-like in structure. A further 72.1 km was under construction. Approximately 157,800 acres lies between the barrier and the Green Line, affecting an estimated 93,200 Palestinians located in these areas. Land confiscations combined with access restrictions associated with the barrier were estimated to have cost Palestinians approximately \$320 million in lost property and income,<sup>1</sup> while the barrier made Palestinian access to Israel’s labour and commodity markets more difficult.<sup>6</sup>

### **III. United Nations response**

#### **A. Human and social development**

14. Ongoing social and economic hardship, compounded by the intensification of the conflict in some areas, meant that shifting the bulk of investments from humanitarian to development programmes was delayed for much of the reporting period. However, with favourable steps taken by both parties towards the end of 2004, several United Nations agencies gave greater attention to medium-term planning and programming, in line with the priorities set out by the Planning Ministry of the Palestinian Authority. In so doing, a number of United Nations agencies also agreed to begin harmonizing their assessment of programme requirements in the occupied Palestinian territory. A key challenge for the United Nations within the framework of its commitment to support the creation of a viable Palestinian State is to ensure increasing technical and capacity-building support for public institutions.

### **Education**

15. United Nations technical agencies have made significant investments in the education sector. This was led by \$131 million in expenditure by UNRWA on 273 elementary and preparatory schools, which catered for some 254,000 pupils. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) provided technical assistance in specific areas including the Education for All initiative, technical and vocational education and training, early childhood education, teacher training, adult literacy, inclusive education and higher education. UNESCO financed and technically supported the first ever Education for All conference in Ramallah in April and May 2004, which launched the Palestinian Education for All national action plan currently being implemented.

16. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) undertook a programme to promote learning in child-friendly environments. In addition to the 68 schools that were supported in 2004, 32 more have been added in 2005. The programme involves community awareness meetings and the training of 800 teachers and 100 school principals in the child-friendly school concept, with an emphasis on non-violence.

### **Health**

17. Investments in health care also remained a priority for specialized United Nations agencies during the reporting period. At a cost of \$32 million, UNRWA continued to operate 54 health facilities providing comprehensive primary health care, supplied rehabilitation services at physiotherapy clinics in 12 of its facilities and operated one 63-bed hospital. The World Health Organization (WHO) invested \$2.5 million in priority development activities in maternal and child health, communicable and non-communicable diseases, nutrition, mental health, food safety and the essential drugs list. With development investments of approximately \$1.4 million, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) focused on improving the accessibility of 42 primary health-care facilities offering reproductive health services, and of 11 comprehensive care facilities. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) efforts in the sector centred on infrastructure support for essential health clinics in remote villages, such as the recently inaugurated clinic of Hija in the Governorate of Qalqilya.

18. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime focused on the prevention of drug abuse and related HIV/AIDS. Representatives of participating non-governmental organizations from Gaza and the West Bank attended a training workshop held by the Office on Drugs and Crime in Cairo from 5 to 7 July 2004, during which they received training on effective HIV/AIDS prevention among injecting drug users, as well as on the preparation and planning of outreach programmes targeting the said users. Following the training workshop, the non-governmental organizations completed their project proposals with the assistance of an Office on Drugs and Crime consultant. The organizations subsequently received Office on Drugs and Crime seed funds amounting to \$25,000 for Gaza and another \$25,000 for the West Bank, to implement outreach activities aimed at the prevention of HIV/AIDS among injecting drug users.

### **Multi-sector development support**

19. The World Bank balanced ongoing emergency efforts with a renewed focus on a medium-term development agenda. It monitored and analysed emerging socio-

economic developments and donor interventions and advised the Palestinian Authority, the United Nations and the donor community on economic development priorities and strategies. The Bank's ongoing portfolio in the occupied Palestinian territory consisted of 14 projects valued at \$164 million, with disbursements of over \$50 million during the reporting period. Key areas of intervention included water, health care, education, social services and the private sector. The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) allocated some \$5 million to improve the general housing conditions of the Palestinian people. Under its regular programme, UNDP provided some \$5.8 million in infrastructure support across a wide range of social sectors.

### **Targeted social assistance**

20. Significant allocations were made to meet the needs of chronically and newly vulnerable Palestinians during the reporting period. The World Bank's \$10 million social safety net project aimed at mitigating the impact of the crisis on the most vulnerable, protect poor children and strengthen the institutional capacity of the Ministry of Social Affairs. The UNRWA Relief and Social Services Programme focused on the most vulnerable refugees, recognizing also the increasing burden of poverty that falls on women. In total, \$17 million was allocated through April 2005 in cash assistance and food aid. Forty-four per cent of the families now receiving support through this targeted programme are headed by women.

21. The World Food Programme (WFP) and the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) identified vulnerable non-refugee beneficiaries for targeted support in food-insecure areas. UNICEF activities covered the areas most affected by closures, demolitions, military incursions and the barrier. To ensure services to the most vulnerable, UNICEF established offices in Gaza, Hebron, Tulkarem, Nablus and Jenin. UNFPA assisted women of reproductive age from geographically isolated areas who were at risk of increased maternal mortality and morbidity, through 313 trained women volunteers in 105 community support teams. At the same time, WHO advocated for safe access to health facilities for all Palestinians.

### **Human rights and women**

22. The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) focused its efforts on increasing the participation of Palestinian women in social, economic and political life, to empower them as agents of change and enable them to cope better with the effects of the crisis. In all its activities, UNIFEM encouraged compliance with international human rights standards, and in particular with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. UNIFEM investment in these activities amounted to \$100,000 for 2004.

23. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) continued its technical assistance programme in support of the rule of law and administration of justice, and in human rights education and awareness. OHCHR activities were carried out in partnership with the Palestinian Authority, the Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizens' Rights, non-governmental organizations and the education sector. Together with the Ministry of Women's Affairs, the Office conducted a workshop on the role of Palestinian women in promoting human rights.



24. UNRWA supported 102 community-based facilities targeting particularly vulnerable segments of the Palestinian refugee community, such as women, children and the disabled. The centres, which encouraged women to play a more public role in society, revealed a strong growth in management, finance and administration skills among refugee women.

25. UNESCO activities included a \$110,000 project aimed at eliminating gender disparities, implemented with the Ministries of Education and Higher Education in cooperation with the Ministry of Women's Affairs. UNESCO also initiated a capacity-development programme that included a series of training workshops providing technical guidance and counselling for students in four selected girls' schools in the West Bank. An agreement was reached to establish a Palestinian women's resource centre, intended as a clearing house for information on women's issues and as a networking, advocacy and policy research centre. UNICEF also initiated a programme to promote and monitor the rights of children and women, and supported the development of a draft juvenile justice law and a draft penal code. In addition, UNICEF initiated studies on child labour, child detention and violence against children.

#### **Millennium Development Goals**

26. Following its Millennium Development Goals report in 2003, UNDP worked to promote the relative agenda among United Nations agencies, Palestinian groups and international partners. In addition, UNDP supported the efforts of the Ministry of Planning to align Palestinian medium-term development priorities with the Millennium Development Goals.

### **B. Support for Palestinian institutions**

27. A critical aspect of institutional support during the reporting period was the emergency financing of the Palestinian Authority's recurrent budget costs. Salary support was a particularly high priority, given the importance of public sector salaries for individual Palestinian livelihoods and for the economy as a whole. The World Bank served as administrator for the multi-donor public financial management-reform trust fund, which as of May 2005 had disbursed over \$198 million in budget support to the Palestinian Authority. Emergency disbursements represented more than 80 per cent of the total over the period. The World Bank's own operations included a number of emergency services support projects, designed to mitigate the deterioration in education, health and social welfare services by financing the goods and services necessary to sustain their delivery. The Bank's contribution of \$60 million to these projects leveraged more than \$115 million from other donors. The projects were critical in covering the non-wage funding gap for key social ministries.

28. In addition to budget support, some \$10 million was invested by United Nations agencies in technical assistance and capacity-building activities directly benefiting the Palestinian Authority. UNDP invested over \$6 million in public institutions, including the provision of direct financial and technical support for the Palestinian Central Elections Commission in the organization of the presidential elections in January 2005. In the area of environmental management, UNDP helped to establish the Palestinian Energy Centre and to introduce the first Palestinian

building code, a first of its kind in the Arab world. The building code provides a blueprint for Palestinian engineers and architects to design and construct buildings that maximize the conservation of energy.

29. WHO actively participated in a health sector review led by the Ministry of Health in coordination with the European Commission, the World Bank, Italy and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. WHO supported the Ministry of Health in formulating and implementing national health policy, particularly in the areas of mental health, nutrition, food safety and essential drugs, while also assisting it to prepare an official report on the state of nutrition in the occupied Palestinian territory. WHO continued to develop and expand the "Health Inforum" information management system, which assisted decision-making during health emergency coordination meetings. WHO also supported technical exchanges on environmental and public health issues by promoting linkages between six European and six Palestinian cities.

30. Also in the health sector, UNFPA capacity-building measures included training the statistical units of five ministries in the areas of population and reproductive health, as well as technical assistance for policy and strategy development. An experts' retreat was sponsored by the Ministry of Planning in April 2004 to discuss potential population issues and policy implications for the Palestinian Authority vis-à-vis development needs. UNFPA provided training to teachers and counsellors in the public school system on issues relating to reproductive health and assisted in developing a curriculum on sexual and reproductive health education for the Ministry of Education. UNICEF provided all necessary information technology infrastructure as well as funding for the training of health staff in the implementation of a harmonized management information system between the Ministry of Health and UNRWA for the immunization programme, allowing the Palestinian Authority to have comprehensive data for all districts in the West Bank.

31. FAO contributed to the establishment of a food insecurity and vulnerability information monitoring system, hosted by the Palestinian central bureau of statistics. Beginning in 2005, the database will enable user-friendly access by stakeholders to updated, comprehensive and policy-relevant information on nutrition, food security and vulnerability. As part of its transition towards longer-term relief and recovery operations, WFP began planning structured capacity-building, increased Palestinian Authority involvement in programme implementation, and gave comprehensive technical support to the Ministries of Social Affairs and Agriculture.

32. Among its capacity-building activities, UNICEF worked with the Ministries of Education and Health to address violence in schools, in line with the intent of the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the children of the world. Three hundred school counsellors from the Ministry of Education were trained, with over 300 still to receive training. A child-friendly schoolteachers' manual and a life skills-based education training manual were produced with the Ministry. UNESCO provided extensive technical assistance and policy and planning advice to the Ministry of Education and Higher Education in the preparation of the Ministry's second medium-term strategic plan. OHCHR worked with the Judicial Education Committee to integrate human rights into the training programme, with the Police Academies in Gaza and Jericho to build human rights into the training

curriculum for law enforcement officials, and with the Ministry of Education regarding human rights education programmes.

33. In the area of culture, UNESCO helped the Ministry of Culture to develop an integrated cultural policy for the Palestinian Authority and to organize, following an interval of four years, the Sixth International Book Fair intended to increase Palestinian access to worldwide knowledge. Approximately half a million books were sold to some 100,000 visitors during the event in March 2005. UNESCO also implemented a comprehensive capacity development programme with the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities to strengthen the Ministry's ability to plan, manage and monitor cultural heritage protection. As a result of this programme, a list of Palestinian cultural and natural heritage sites has been prepared for the first time.

34. In the area of economic development, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) continued to provide the Palestinian Authority and civil society with a range of technical assistance, advisory services and capacity-building projects, covering areas such as customs administration and automation, development strategies, trade policy, investment retention, public debt management and trade facilitation. Cumulative donor commitments to UNCTAD projects between 2001-2004 have amounted to \$2.2 million to date, of which over \$1.5 million has been spent. The International Labour Organization (ILO) assisted Palestinian employers' and workers' organizations, and contributed to developing a fund for employment and social protection, established by presidential decree to coordinate all financial and technical assistance for employment creation. The ILO also helped the Ministry of Labour to strengthen its labour market information system and to create an employment task force. In partnership with the Ministry of Social Affairs, ILO supported the establishment in Hebron of a vocational and rehabilitation centre for people with disabilities and special needs. The amount invested in these activities by ILO was nearly \$5 million.

35. In other technical areas, the International Atomic Energy Agency assisted the Palestinian Authority with agricultural pest control. A team of six from the Ministry of Agriculture continued receiving technical support in the application of isotope and radiation technologies to control and monitor the Mediterranean fruit fly population in the Gaza Strip. UN-Habitat began supporting the Palestinian Authority in urban planning and development, as well as in efforts to develop a housing policy for the occupied Palestinian territory.

36. In addition to support for public institutions, United Nations agencies continued to play a role in promoting the activities and development of civil society, particularly through partnerships with Palestinian and international non-governmental organizations. OHCHR finalized agreements with the Palestinian Independent Commission on Citizens' Rights, a Palestinian human rights institution, for a joint programme that will include capacity-building initiatives, and continued to work closely with the broader community of non-governmental organizations involved in human rights through awareness-raising activities and training on international human rights mechanisms. Through its six field coordination offices, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs was an important focal point for United Nations interaction with humanitarian non-governmental organizations.

### **C. Development of the private sector**

37. While the recovery of the Palestinian economy hinges on the broader political situation and status of the internal and external closure regime, much depends on the channelling of private sector skills and resources towards growth-productive and employment-intensive sectors, such as agriculture, construction and manufacturing. Although higher bank lending rates during 2004 indicated a spontaneous renewal in private economic activity and risk taking, the recovery by the private sector witnessed in the first months of 2005 was increasingly articulated as a strategy of choice, among Palestinians and the international community, for generating economic growth during the post-disengagement period. In this context, several United Nations organizations sought to support the Palestinian private sector.

38. Prominent among these was the UNWRA microfinance programme, which disbursed some 15,000 loans valued at over \$17 million to small businesses, maintaining a repayment rate of over 90 per cent. The UNDP programme for rural and economic development involved investments of some \$5 million in new projects for land reclamation and integrated rural development. In addition, FAO and UNDP assisted the Ministry of Agriculture in developing an agricultural revitalization programme to promote agricultural activities throughout the occupied Palestinian territory. Within this framework, FAO began implementing a \$1.5 million project to support horticulture, animal husbandry and agricultural marketing in four districts of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Also prominent were two ongoing World Bank private sector projects, including a \$10 million programme to develop the Gaza industrial estates, and a \$17 million Palestinian housing project.

39. The Arab-International Forum on Rehabilitation and Development in the Occupied Palestinian Territory: towards an Independent State was an important regional initiative organized by ESCWA in October 2004. The event brought together major Arab, Islamic and Western financial institutions, international organizations, Palestinian business leaders and representatives of the Palestinian Authority to explore options for future private sector growth in the occupied Palestinian territory.

### **D. United Nations emergency assistance**

40. Given the ongoing political instability and economic hardship during most of the reporting period, a large proportion of United Nations assistance to the occupied Palestinian territory was directed towards short-term, emergency responses. Operations were frequently affected by restrictions on the movement of goods and personnel. As the political situation appeared to improve in the first months of 2005, the increasing attention of donors to medium-term assistance agendas resulted in a relative decline in support for emergency programmes.

#### **Emergency food and agriculture support**

41. According to UNRWA, food support was provided to almost 30 per cent of the refugee population of the occupied Palestinian territory, i.e., 95,000 families in the West Bank and 127,000 families in the Gaza Strip. Restrictions on movement and declining donor support, however, required UNRWA to scale back its core

emergency interventions, including food aid. As a result, there was a 30 per cent reduction in the nutritional value of food distributions in the West Bank.

42. WFP opened its third consecutive emergency operation in September 2004. The operation, which directed food support to 480,000 non-refugee Palestinians, was aimed mainly at supporting livelihoods and to prevent a worsening of the nutritional status of the most vulnerable Palestinians. WFP began addressing its humanitarian access problems to Gaza through purchasing 93 per cent of its food commodities locally within the Strip. In addition, WFP has injected over \$10 million into the economies of Gaza and the West Bank, by local purchases of wheat flour, olive oil and other food commodities. Between 1 April 2004 and 31 March 2005, WFP delivered over 70,000 metric tonnes of food aid to almost 400,000 beneficiaries, at a total expense of \$35 million.

43. FAO supported the rehabilitation of destroyed and damaged greenhouses. A \$1 million emergency project included agricultural inputs and equipment, as well as numerous training courses for technicians and farmers on greenhouse construction and management and new cultivation methods.

#### **Emergency employment support**

44. The UNRWA job creation programme prioritized refugees with large families, supporting livelihoods with a remuneration of \$10 to \$12 per day per worker (an average of \$2 per dependent per day). Employment programmes contributed to the repair of refugee camp infrastructure and the renovation of agency facilities. UNDP mobilized \$58 million from Arab, Asian and Western donors for labour-intensive infrastructure projects. Of this amount, \$18 million was spent on emergency employment programmes. WFP provided food-for-work and food-for-training support for 39,700 workers from recently impoverished households, benefiting some 238,000 family members.

#### **Emergency health support**

45. Access for Palestinians to preventative and curative health services remained good overall. However, many Palestinians faced delays in access to medical treatment due to closure, and access to mental health treatment was insufficient to cope with the increase in conflict-related psychological disorders. Critically, it was estimated that households located in areas crossed by the barrier were 80 to 300 per cent more likely to experience difficulty in access to health services. Drops in income limited the ability of many households to pay for private health care. Access to hospital care for hardship social cases and Palestinians living below the poverty line was half that of those living above the poverty line.

46. UNRWA ran five mobile units in 2004, although plans to add two more in 2005 are on hold due to funding shortfalls. A total of 112,966 patients were seen in 2004 at a cost of \$2 million. UNRWA also participated in a measles and vitamin A campaign, launched in collaboration with UNICEF and the Ministry of Health, during which 85,000 children below five years of age were vaccinated. UNICEF procured all necessary vaccines and vaccine-related supplies for the Palestinian Authority and UNRWA immunization clinics for 2005. In partnership with non-governmental organizations and the Palestinian Authority, UNICEF also provided emergency health kits, midwifery and obstetric kits, and generators to assist 10,000 people residing in Gaza Strip enclaves.

47. UNICEF and its non-governmental organization partners established nine psychosocial emergency teams of approximately 20 qualified professionals each, in order to address the conflict-related distress of children and their caregivers. In total, 4,700 children affected by violent incursions and house demolitions attended debriefing sessions. A further 14,600 caregivers were acquainted with techniques on how to detect signs of distress in children and to provide them with adequate support. Approximately 60,000 children were reached indirectly through this project. UNICEF also worked closely with the national Mine Action Committee in reviewing the national strategy and in training trainers for mine risk education. A media campaign was launched in the Gaza Strip after the incursions in September and October 2004, to create awareness of the dangers of unexploded ordnance. UNRWA provided psychosocial counselling to nearly 70,000 refugee children during the 2003-2004 school year.

48. A \$1 million UNFPA emergency relief programme supported an obstetric care needs assessment in the areas isolated by the barrier; it involved the training of 195 health personnel and the procurement of 200 emergency kits to reduce the risks of maternal and infant mortality. WHO provided emergency coordination and distributed medical equipment, emergency health kits and other supplies.

#### **Emergency education support**

49. In the 2003 and 2004 academic years, 272 UNRWA schools in the West Bank and Gaza were closed for a collective total of 391 days. UNRWA attempted to address the challenges to its educational programmes by conducting remedial classes. The programme was suspended in the Gaza Strip in 2003 due to funding shortfalls, but started up again in 2004 to provide services to some 33,000 students in the West Bank.

50. UNICEF spent \$4 million on emergency education assistance to families during the military operations in the Gaza Strip. Approximately 20,000 children were provided with remedial worksheets, school bags and stationery items, as well as basic clothing items. Some 375 school-in-a-box kits were distributed to the most severely affected schools in Gaza, serving an estimated 30,000 students.

#### **Emergency infrastructure support**

51. Israeli military incursions and house demolitions intensified during the reporting period. Approximately 1,350 houses were partially or completely destroyed in the Gaza Strip, affecting some 10,000 people. As a result, the United Nations increasingly focused on the immediate need to rebuild shelters and repair roads and water and sanitation systems.

52. UNRWA allocated \$6 million to shelter reconstruction and repair in the Gaza Strip, and completed the construction of over 300 new homes in Khan Younis and Rafah, where 80 per cent of house demolitions have occurred. In the Gaza Strip, UNRWA also supported the repair of roads, sewage and water systems and UNRWA installations, the bulk of which was related to damage incurred in Rafah in May 2004. In the West Bank, UNRWA provided grants to individuals for emergency shelter repair, and completed the Jenin Camp Reconstruction Project, costing \$27 million, in December 2004. The project included 435 new homes and related community infrastructure. Since September 2000, the total grants for shelter repair

in the West Bank amounted to \$3.4 million, while in the Gaza Strip \$21.7 million has been allocated to shelter repair and reconstruction.

53. Emergency infrastructure programmes implemented by UNDP covered a wide range of public services and municipal utilities, schools, hospitals, clinics, roads, sanitation systems and water treatment facilities. Expenditure for emergency infrastructure support amounted to \$11 million.

## **E. Coordination of United Nations assistance**

54. The Office of the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority continued its coordination of United Nations assistance to the Palestinian people and its representation of the United Nations system at donor forums. It remains the co-chair of the all-donor Local Aid Coordination Committee and vice-chair of the Humanitarian and Emergency Policy Group; it also participated on behalf of the United Nations at the December 2004 meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee in Oslo and at the London meeting of March 2005. Locally, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process convened regular coordination meetings of United Nations agencies and several extraordinary meetings on issues of special policy interest to the United Nations. In order to strengthen a single voice for the United Nations in the region, the Office also served as co-chair of the United Nations Advocacy and Public Information Committee. In late April 2005, the Office began serving as the focal point for coordination between the United Nations system and the new office of the Quartet Special Envoy for Disengagement, Mr. Wolfensohn.

55. In the second half of 2004, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs led in the preparation of the 2005 consolidated appeal process, under which a total of over \$302 million was requested to finance activities for 11 agencies and five non-governmental organizations; it also established a database to monitor the progress of consolidated appeal-related projects. The 2005 appeal focused attention on preventing a further deterioration of the socio-economic situation, ensuring civilian protection and targeting of emergency assistance to locations with acute humanitarian needs arising from the conflict, notably in the Gaza Strip, Nablus and Hebron. For the first time, the 2005 appeal preparation benefited from a gender adviser, provided by UNIFEM, to mainstream gender issues in the annual appeal. By May 2005, the Office had received \$953,000 in donor contributions through the 2005 consolidated appeal process.

56. On the ground, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs coordinated emergency operational responses and humanitarian assistance from its Jerusalem headquarters and its field offices located in the Gaza Strip, Hebron, Ramallah, Jerusalem, Nablus and Tulkarm. Humanitarian responses were coordinated by liaising with local authorities and municipalities, United Nations agencies and NGO partners. The Office's humanitarian coordination costs for 2004 amounted to some \$2.8 million from voluntary donor contributions.

57. In the latter months of 2004, the United Nations country team, led by a core group of agencies and facilitated by the United Nations Development Group, began discussions to initiate a common assessment of medium-term development needs and programme requirements for the occupied Palestinian territory. The objectives

of the joint assessment, which would take place later in 2005, were to promote a gradual harmonization of United Nations programmes and to strengthen their consistency with the central development priorities of the Palestinian Authority.

#### **Humanitarian access**

58. Access for humanitarian personnel of all agencies and emergency supplies to the Gaza Strip was particularly problematic due to Israeli restrictions and repeated closures at Erez, Karni and Rafah terminals during the reporting period, even forcing a three-month suspension of food distributions by UNRWA in Gaza between June and September 2004. The restrictions violate established principles of international law, and moreover raise transaction costs for operational agencies, which are ultimately borne by the international community. Since October 2000, cumulative costs incurred due to additional storage, demurrage and transport amounted to \$10.6 million by February 2005. In the same period, staff-related costs of closure amounted to almost \$20 million.

#### **United Nations media and public information activities**

59. As part of their mandated advocacy work, the United Nations agencies continued to work closely with international and local media to draw attention to and provide information on the situation of the Palestinian people and about the United Nations presence in the region. A new inter-agency coordination mechanism, joint and agency-specific press releases, media information tours, press conferences and a number of other media activities were carried out to inform the public about the humanitarian situation in the occupied Palestinian territory. A prominent new public outreach initiative launched during 2004 was the WHO *Bridges* magazine, conceived and produced jointly by Israeli and Palestinian health professionals. For its part, UNESCO provided expert advice to media institutions, assisted in the preparation of the media legislative framework and supported activities in television and radio productions (with special emphasis on children's programmes). UNESCO also promoted a media training centre in Gaza and provided equipment and training to the Palestinian news agency and other media centres in the West Bank.

### **IV. Donor response to the crisis**

60. Donor assistance continued to be channelled towards immediate emergency and humanitarian priorities, although towards the end of 2004 attention was increasingly centred on requirements for economic recovery over the medium term. This shift was inspired by the Palestinian Authority's success in managing the leadership transition following the death of President Arafat, the positive steps that were subsequently made with Israel on the political track and a relative reduction in violence. Despite these initial steps, a fiscal crisis within the Palestinian Authority required emergency budget support towards the end of the year. Donors generally agreed that economic recovery, and the additional injections of assistance that it would require, would need to be based on evidence of progress on the ground, particularly in easing the closure regime and bringing about critical reforms in the Palestinian Authority.



## **A. Emergency budget and fiscal support**

61. Internal revenues of the Palestinian Authority were strong, reaching pre-September 2000 levels by the third quarter of 2004, with gross revenue up 30 per cent from 2003. By the end of 2004, domestic tax revenues were 37 per cent higher than in 2003; non-tax revenues similarly increased by 21 per cent, excluding profit transfers from the Palestinian monetary fund. Overall, even though total revenues for 2004 exceeded budget projections by over \$100 million, external donor support did not meet projections. This shortfall, together with a 17 per cent rise in public sector wage costs, left an estimated \$160 million financial gap by the fourth quarter of 2004, resulting in a 57 per cent increase in public sector bank borrowing. Budgetary aid came primarily from the European Union, Saudi Arabia and the World Bank public financial management-reform trust fund (see para. 27). Budget projections for 2005 point to continued strong total revenue performance, with an increase of 8.4 per cent above 2004 levels.

## **B. Support for Palestinian reform**

62. The Task Force on Palestinian Reform continued to monitor and support the Palestinian reform process in the areas of elections, financial accountability, the judicial sector and rule of law, legislation, market economy, local government and public administration, and worked with the Palestinian Authority Reform Coordination Support Unit to develop a one-year reform action plan. A number of donors expressed interest in supporting the reform plan, raising hopes for targeted funding to support certain components of the reform effort.

63. Overall, there was positive progress in the areas of elections and financial accountability, which enjoyed strong donor support. Progress was slower in the judicial sector, however, in part due to unresolved conflicts between judicial authorities. In the legislative and the municipal sectors, the Task Force reported that a frequent lack of political will among different parties, financial strains on the Palestinian Authority and intensification of the conflict combined to hinder further progress. The transition in the leadership of the Palestinian Authority towards the end of 2004, renewed dialogue with Israel and a renewed commitment by key international donors offered new promise for the reform agenda in 2005.

## **C. Donor coordination**

64. To address the economic crisis, the main donor coordination body, the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, met in Oslo on 8 December 2004. The World Bank report discussed at the meeting acknowledged disengagement as a potential opportunity for economic renewal, but also stressed the need for an easing of the existing closure regime and significant progress by the Palestinian Authority in the areas of security and institutional reform. The donors endorsed the findings of the report, and agreed that the World Bank, in consultation with them, would develop a set of indicators against which the performance of both parties could be measured. Donors concluded that disengagement should be implemented on the basis of close coordination among the parties, within the context of the road map.

65. At the local level, donor coordination efforts continued through the Local Aid Coordination Committee and its sub-structures: the Humanitarian and Emergency Policy Group, the Task Force on Project Implementation and the Sector Working Groups. The Committee itself met on 13 occasions.

66. In follow-up to the London meeting of 1 March 2005, consultations were initiated in the international community to review and mainstream donor assistance coordination structures. The aim of this process was to better integrate international assistance and reform efforts, enhance the leadership role of the Palestinian Authority in aid management and ensure more effective donor coordination. Options for renewed donor assistance coordination structures were presented to the Palestinian Authority in April 2005.

## **V. Challenges ahead**

### **A. Political, economic and social challenges**

67. Despite positive initial steps by both parties towards the end of 2004 and early 2005, a primary political challenge ahead remains the institution of a comprehensive political dialogue, and follow-up on the parties' respective commitments and obligations under the road map. The international community, the United Nations and the Quartet will need to seize the opportunity by redoubling their efforts to achieve the full implementation of the road map, as endorsed by the Security Council in its resolution 1515 (2003).

68. Progress on the social and economic front will continue to face several challenges. Unless significantly eased, internal and external closures will continue to be serious obstructions to economic recovery and development opportunities for the majority of Palestinians. Reform of Palestinian public institutions, and improving their capacity to assume increasing leadership in aid management, development planning and effective social service delivery, will constitute additional challenges, the urgency of which will be highlighted during and immediately after disengagement. The United Nations system will be required, actively and coherently, to identify opportunities to support Palestinian institutions during this critical period.

69. An immediate challenge will be to generate tangible improvements in the quality of life for Palestinians both in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, while also laying the ground for long-term economic recovery.

70. Despite an apparent stabilization of the economy and growth in private sector activities since 2003, progress towards economic recovery is unlikely to benefit all Palestinians comprehensively or equitably. Many refugee and non-refugee Palestinians who lost assets and livelihoods during the years of the second intifada are likely to increase the numbers of the chronically poor, and will require targeted social assistance over the medium term. Public institutions are likely to remain only partially able to finance and implement large-scale social assistance programmes in the near term. As such, significant financial support from the international community will continue to be needed. Active steps will have to be taken to ensure that such support effectively strengthens the social planning and delivery capacities of the Palestinian Authority.

71. In operation terms, closures, security restrictions and uncertainty over the full respect by Israeli authorities for United Nations privileges and immunities are likely to continue to pose important challenges to access for, and consequently to the implementation of, United Nations assistance programmes. In order to meet this challenge, United Nations agencies, with support from their respective headquarters, will need to adopt a more robust common approach to access.

## **B. Unmet and emerging requirements**

72. For the majority of United Nations agencies, immediate support will be needed to address persisting problems of poverty, social vulnerability and food insecurity through a combination of measures, including employment creation, small-scale credit, the delivery of essential social services and targeted food assistance in cases of acute need. Such immediate requirements were analysed and framed during 2004, for a three-year time period, under a national programme for social protection as part of the Palestinian Authority's medium-term development plan.

73. Barrier-affected communities will have an increasingly wide set of needs, but responses will continue to pose complex legal, social and political problems for donors and international organizations. In particular, the legal implications of various types of humanitarian assistance, including the provision of temporary social services, merit careful consideration as part of the design phase of individual projects. The Ministry of Planning has initiated a process to assist international partners in selecting projects that are compatible with international legal obligations. Moreover, the Local Aid Coordination Committee will continue to explore with donors and international organizations appropriate programme interventions for barrier-affected populations. There are also concerns that the completion of the barrier, which will impede access between East Jerusalem and the West Bank, will have significant adverse effects on the operations of those United Nations agencies that rely on the movement of national staff complements between the said areas.

74. Short-term needs associated with the disengagement plan are likely to include the pre-positioning of supplies, food commodities and preparedness of emergency services, in anticipation of potential political or security contingencies during and immediately after Israeli withdrawal. Longer-term United Nations programme requirements resulting from disengagement are likely to be complex, and will depend on the nature and extent of the withdrawal itself and of territorial and commercial linkages with the remainder of the occupied Palestinian territory, Israel and the region. Future needs will also depend on the ability of the Palestinian Authority to project authority, ensure effective administration and deliver effective public services, including public security, in the areas of Israeli withdrawal.

## **VI. Observations**

75. There have been positive political developments towards the end of the period covered in the present report, with both the Palestinians and the Israelis reaffirming their commitment to the road map and the cessation of violence. Reaching a peaceful solution to this conflict, which continues to claim lives and devastate communities, however, will require that both sides follow through with those

commitments. While it is hoped that emerging opportunities can be realized, Palestinians will continue to face severe socio-economic hardship and formidable challenges in the areas of reform and governance in the year ahead.

76. Within this context, United Nations agencies, donors and humanitarian organizations will need to meet a wide variety of programming needs regarding assistance to the Palestinian people in 2005 and 2006, while balancing short-term emergency requirements with a coherent development focus on the medium and long term. Therefore, it is vital that the international community continue to provide the necessary resources for assistance programmes for the Palestinian people.

77. The parties must make every effort to facilitate the work of United Nations agencies and partners in the donor and aid communities. I call especially upon the Government of Israel to ease restrictions and work closely with United Nations agencies, donors and humanitarian organizations to ensure that aid and development projects are delivered in a timely and comprehensive manner. Effective steps by the Palestinian Authority to lessen Israel's security concerns would facilitate such an effort.

78. While international assistance can alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people, only a peace process and a full and final settlement of the conflict will enable a shift from crisis management and recovery to sustained and sustainable development and prosperity. Such a settlement can be achieved through the full implementation of the Quartet's road map, designed to resolve the Israel-Palestinian conflict and end the occupation that began in 1967.

79. The broader aim of the United Nations and, indeed, the entire international community, remains the realization of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East, based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 1397 (2002) and 1515 (2003), and the establishment of a sovereign, democratic, viable and contiguous Palestinian State living side-by-side in peace with a secure Israel.

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> World Bank, *Stagnation or Revival? Israeli Disengagement and Palestinian Economic Prospects*, December 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Out of the total estimate of 1.3 million food-insecure Palestinians, 560,000 are refugees and 750,000 non-refugees. Half of the governorates of the West Bank and Gaza has remained at the same levels of food insecurity, a quarter has become more food insecure while a quarter has improved.

<sup>3</sup> According to ILO definition.

<sup>4</sup> According to surveys conducted by the Graduate Institute of Development Studies in 2001, 2002 and 2003, the number of children working has risen from 10 per cent to 23 per cent.

<sup>5</sup> Calculation by the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process based on commodities flow data from the Palestinian Authority Ministry of Finance and the National Security Force.

<sup>6</sup> Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, *Economic Adaptation and Fragmentation in the rural West Bank* (unpublished).



# General Assembly Economic and Social Council

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Strengthening of the coordination of  
humanitarian and disaster relief assistance  
of the United Nations, including special  
economic assistance**

**Economic and Social Council  
Substantive session of 2006  
Geneva, 3-28 July 2006  
Item 9 of the provisional agenda\*\*  
Implementation of the Declaration on the  
Granting of Independence to Colonial  
Countries and Peoples by the specialized  
agencies and the international institutions  
associated with the United Nations**

## Assistance to the Palestinian people

### Report of the Secretary-General

#### *Summary*

The year under review was marked by the implementation of Israel's disengagement from the Gaza Strip and parts of the northern West Bank, the attainment of an Agreement on Movement and Access which was only partly implemented, ongoing violence claiming innocent lives on both sides, the continuation of a tight closure policy by the Israeli authorities, the incapacitation of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, and legislative elections both in Israel and in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The Israeli elections led to the formation of a coalition Government, under the leadership of Acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert of the Kadima party. The Palestinian elections were won by the Hamas "Change and Reform" list of candidates.

Following the Hamas victory, many donors undertook a review of their assistance policy to the Palestinian Authority, in the context of the principles spelled out by the Middle East Quartet in its statement of 30 January 2006. The Government of Israel also decided to withhold the payment of the taxes and duties collected on behalf of the Palestinian Authority. The latter is consequently facing an acute fiscal crisis, which risks further exacerbating an already precarious economic and social situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Setting aside their previous focus on

\* A/61/50 and Corr.1.

\*\* E/2006/100.

a transition towards medium- and longer-term development planning, United Nations agencies and programmes emphasized emergency assistance as their main priority.

The present report contains a description of efforts made by United Nations agencies, in cooperation with Palestinian and donor counterparts, to support the Palestinian civilian population and institutions.

## **I. Introduction**

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 60/126 of 15 December 2005, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its sixty-first session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution. The reporting period was from May 2005 to April 2006.

2. Information on the living and socio-economic conditions of the Palestinian people is provided in reports prepared by other United Nations agencies, including, (a) the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan (A/60/65-E/2005/13); (b) the annual report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) (A/60/13); and (c) the report of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and of UNRWA entitled "The Humanitarian Impact of the West Bank Barrier on the Palestinian Community, Special Focus on crossing the Barrier: Palestinian Access to Agricultural Land".

3. Throughout the year, the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority continued his efforts to support the peace process and to ensure effective coordination between the Palestinian Authority, the United Nations, the international community and the Government of Israel, as well as to document the economic and social conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

4. The present report provides an overview of the work of the United Nations agencies, in cooperation with Palestinian and donor counterparts, to assist the Palestinian people and institutions, as described in General Assembly resolution 60/126. Also included are observations of the political climate and related challenges as the international community responds to the crisis and works to end the cycle of violence, alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people, and move forward towards a resumption of negotiations for a peaceful settlement.

## **II. Overview of the current situation**

### **Political context**

5. The beginning of the reporting period was dominated by preparations for Israeli disengagement from the Gaza Strip. In May 2005, the Middle East Quartet appointed a Special Envoy for Disengagement to coordinate with the parties and the international community. In June, a United States Security Coordinator was appointed to promote Palestinian security reform, and to ensure coordination between the parties during the withdrawal. In September 2005, Israel concluded its withdrawal of settlers and military personnel from the Gaza Strip and parts of the northern West Bank. The Secretary-General praised the determination and political courage shown in that regard by Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. He also congratulated Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas for his role in ensuring a peaceful and coordinated withdrawal.

6. On 25 January 2006, the Hamas list of candidates for “Change and Reform” won a majority victory in the Palestinian legislative elections. In its statement on 30 January, the Quartet congratulated the Palestinian people on an electoral process that was free, fair and secure, but stressed that a new Palestinian government should be committed to non-violence, recognition of Israel’s right to exist, and acceptance of previous agreements and obligations, including the road map. The Security Council subsequently took the same position.<sup>1</sup> Citing a lack of movement by the new Palestinian Authority towards the Quartet’s three principles, many donors undertook to review their assistance programmes and to examine alternative channels of funding and the United States and the European Union announced a freeze on their assistance to the Palestinian Authority, while maintaining direct assistance to the Palestinian people.

7. Following the incapacitation of Israeli Prime Minister Sharon on 4 January 2006, Deputy Prime Minister Ehud Olmert temporarily assumed the leadership of the Government, and led Mr. Sharon’s new Kadima party into national elections on 28 March. Kadima won 29 seats in the Knesset, and Mr. Olmert was tasked with forming a new Government. The international community continued to monitor developments surrounding Kadima’s plan, announced during the electoral campaign, to withdraw further from areas of the West Bank and to define permanent borders over the next four years.

#### **Humanitarian and socio-economic context**

8. According to the World Bank, real gross domestic product (GDP) grew for the third consecutive year, by an estimated 6.3 per cent in 2005.<sup>2</sup> GDP per capita remained 33 per cent lower than in 1999, however, indicating pressures of ongoing demographic growth.<sup>2</sup> A climate of economic uncertainty and social hardship continued throughout the year, worsened by recurring violence, ongoing construction of the Barrier, restrictions on movement, land confiscation, house demolitions, arrests and detentions by the Israeli authorities and intensification, from August onwards, of the fiscal crisis. With the election of Hamas, prospects for continued international financial support for the Palestinian Authority lessened, leading to a risk of contraction in the Palestinian economy.

9. An estimated 48 per cent of Palestinians were living below the poverty line at the end of 2005. Unemployment levels reached 23.4 per cent, according to the International Labour Organization (ILO). Food insecurity continued to affect some 37 per cent of the population,<sup>3</sup> and an increase in stunting levels among children, particularly in rural and refugee families, was detected, according to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. Seventy-six per cent of Palestinians throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory stated their need for assistance.<sup>4</sup>

10. Important challenges remained after disengagement. While internal closures within Gaza were lifted, external closures remained in place and under Israeli control. An Agreement on Movement and Access was signed on 15 November 2005. It included a provision on the opening of the Rafah border crossing between Egypt and Gaza, implemented 26 December 2005, with technical assistance from the European Union. Since then, the Rafah crossing point has remained operational, with a daily average of 1,315 travellers using the crossing as of the end of March.<sup>5</sup> Other aspects of the Agreement, however, are yet to be implemented.



11. In 2005, the Erez crossing was closed for 54 per cent of the year, or 198 days, and for 75 per cent of the year, if weekend days are included. The Erez industrial zone ceased to operate in September. Previously, the average number of daily workers and traders entering the estate had been 295 and 131, respectively, a decline of 90 per cent compared to pre-intifada figures.

12. Imports from Israel through the main commercial terminal rose by 5 per cent, though exports declined by 30 per cent in 2005 compared with 2004. The Karni crossing was closed 18 per cent of the year in 2005. The sustained closure of the Karni commercial crossing, which occurred for 47 days between 1 January and 31 March 2006, led to an acute shortage of wheat flour stocks, resulting in bread shortages in mid-March. Since 21 March, the Karni crossing has been used for imports, although in a lesser capacity.

13. Exports from Gaza via the Karni crossing failed to meet the target of 150 trucks per day as set out in the Agreement on Access and Movement. The Palestine Economic Development Company, which manages the greenhouses in the former settlement areas, reported total export losses of more than US\$ 8.5 million owing to the closures at Karni. More than 600 tons of vegetables were destroyed or donated. Total export losses for both agricultural and non-perishable items were estimated at more than \$23 million for the first three months of 2006. As of 27 March, the average monthly number of truckloads in 2006 for imported goods was 2,465, well below the monthly average of 4,561 truckloads for 2005.

14. The Agreement on Access and Movement contained a provision on the easing of internal closures within the West Bank. During 2005 the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, with the support of the Quartet Special Envoy for Disengagement, worked closely with Israeli military officials to determine methods for reducing the number of obstacles to internal movement within the West Bank. As a result of those efforts, the number of obstacles fell from 605 to 396 between May and November 2005. The number of obstacles rose again towards the end of 2005, however, in the wake of two suicide bombings in the Israeli coastal towns of Netanya and Hadera. The number of obstacles imposed on the West Bank reached some 505 by the end of March 2006. Other aspects of the Agreement, including the establishment of a land link between Gaza and the West Bank and the opening of air and sea outlets in Gaza, were not implemented.

### **Barrier**

15. On 9 July 2004, the International Court of Justice rendered an advisory opinion<sup>6</sup> stating that the construction of the Barrier “constitutes breaches by Israel of several of its obligations under the applicable international humanitarian law and human rights instruments”. On 20 July 2004, the General Assembly adopted resolution ES-10/15, in which the Assembly acknowledged the Court’s advisory opinion and asked that Israel comply with its legal obligations. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to establish a register of Barrier-related damages.

16. Israel continued the construction of the Barrier. By mid-January 2006, approximately 299 km (44.6 per cent) was completed and a further 124 km (18.5 per cent) was under construction. Some 247 km remains projected. Of the constructed Barrier, 38 km was made up of 9-metre-high concrete slabs and the remainder consisted of a combination of ditches, trenches, roads, razor wire, and electric fences. If all of the Ma’ale Adumim and Ari’el/Emmanuel sections marked as

“subject to the completion of further inter-ministerial examination” are included, then approximately 57,050 hectares or about 10.1 per cent of land in the West Bank and East Jerusalem will lie between the Barrier and the Green Line.

17. The reporting period saw major steps towards the completion of the Barrier around Jerusalem, severely disrupting the movement of Palestinians between the West Bank and East Jerusalem which, as a key commercial hub, accounts for about 30 per cent of the Palestinian economy. Approximately one quarter of East Jerusalem residents will live to the east of the planned Barrier and will need to cross it to access services inside Jerusalem.

### **III. United Nations response**

#### **A. Human and social development**

##### **Education**

18. The UNRWA Education Programme was its largest yet in terms of budgetary and human resources. For the approximately 254,175 pupils enrolled in 273 UNRWA elementary and preparatory schools, education is free of charge. UNRWA also provided technical, paramedical and commercial training at four vocational training centres for refugee youth. The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) achieved progress in improving teaching and learning processes in the classroom as well as increased participation in extra-curricular activities, and quality learning through the use of remedial education. UNICEF and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) began work on a joint programme on girls’ education.

19. UNESCO launched a \$15.1 million project supporting an equitable and efficient funding mechanism for Palestinian higher education aimed at providing scholarships to some 20,000 Palestinian students and direct grants to universities. Several new capacity-building activities for non-formal education and in line with the United Nations Literacy Decade were implemented focusing on vulnerable groups, such as women, children with special needs and illiterate adults and with emphasis on early childhood care and education for preschool educational planning. Within the framework of the Education for All initiative, UNESCO continued to provide advice to the Ministry of Education and Higher Education towards the finalization of its new five-year development plan. A feasibility study on the production of textbooks and curricula was also completed. Technical assistance towards the development of a national teacher education strategy as well as in the field of technical and vocational education and training was provided, resulting into the strategic review of the Implementation Plan of the technical and vocational education and training National Strategy.

20. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) contributed to the Education for All initiative through the construction and rehabilitation of 26 schools, provision of computers and educational materials for 120 schools, and teacher training. It developed the Palestinian Education Initiative with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education and the World Economic Forum, and provided training to teachers to improve the current quality of education. The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) supported a pilot initiative in Palestinian

schools to raise awareness of the issues of sexual assault and rape and developed a sex education curriculum to be incorporated into schools. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) concluded an agreement with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education towards implementing the first phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) successfully integrated reproductive and sex education into the home economics (for girls) and environmental education (for boys) curriculum for grades 9 and 10.

### **Health**

21. During the reporting period, UNRWA continued to operate 54 facilities providing comprehensive primary health care at a cost of \$22 million, and to implement its Environmental Health Programme to reduce morbidity and the risks of disease outbreak within refugee camps. The World Health Organization (WHO) invested a total of \$2.5 million in technical assistance to the Ministry of Health in key health areas such as mental health, nutrition, food safety and communicable diseases. WHO continued to lead the coordination and information-sharing system and facilitated effective communication between Palestinian and Israeli health professionals and institutions. With development investments of approximately \$1.1 million, UNFPA focused on improving the accessibility of 41 primary health-care facilities offering reproductive health services, and 11 comprehensive care facilities in the most populated and underprivileged areas.

22. UNICEF focused on achieving the Millennium Development Goals, in particular the goal of reducing child mortality. UNICEF programming included capacity-building of health-care providers, and providing all the vaccines and vaccine-related supplies for immunization services at the 413 clinics run by the Palestinian Authority and 53 centres administered by UNRWA. In addition, UNICEF provided essential drugs and facilitated the upgrading of cold chain equipment required for immunization. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime continued to focus on the prevention of drug abuse in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Experts from Gaza and the West Bank attended a workshop sponsored by the Office on Drugs and Crime and UNAIDS, on the prevention of HIV/AIDS among injecting drug users. UNIFEM initiated a national study on gender and HIV/AIDS as part of a larger regional initiative to identify and develop advocacy and communication strategies. UNIFEM also developed a code of ethics regarding domestic violence to be adopted by health-care workers.

23. In 2006, the region was struck by an outbreak of avian flu. Several agencies cooperated to assist the Palestinian Authority in responding to the crisis and raising public awareness, including the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNRWA and the World Bank. WHO trained key lab technicians and provided reagents. UNICEF trained primary and secondary teachers in all districts and health managers in 15 districts. The regional dimension of the crisis also meant close collaboration between the Palestinian and Israeli Health and Agriculture ministries.

### **Multisector development support**

24. The World Bank balanced ongoing emergency efforts with a continued focus on a medium-term development agenda. It monitored and analysed emerging socio-economic developments and donor interventions and advised the Palestinian Authority, the United Nations and the donor community on economic development priorities and strategies. The Bank's ongoing portfolio consisted of 12 projects valued at \$154 million. Under its regular programme, UNDP provided some \$5.8 million in infrastructure support across a wide range of social sectors. The overall ongoing portfolio of UNDP consisted of several programmes valued at \$110 million with disbursements of over \$61 million during the reporting period. UNDP provided technical advice on the preparation of the Palestinian Medium-Term Development Plan. ESCWA also supported the preparation of the Plan, by assisting the Ministry of Planning in bringing the various parties to achieve a national consensus on that vision.<sup>7</sup>

25. The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) allocated some \$5 million to improve the human settlements and housing conditions of the Palestinian people. UNRWA began a process to examine how to better address deteriorating living conditions of the 1.6 million refugees living in 27 camps. The Agency sought to situate its shelter and re-housing efforts within a broader approach to camp development.

### **Targeted social assistance**

26. Through its Special Hardship Case Programme, UNRWA distributed food and cash subsidy packages on a quarterly basis valued at \$83 per person during the reporting period. In addition, UNRWA provided hundreds of refugees with apprenticeships and vocational or teacher training opportunities. The World Food Programme (WFP) and FAO identified vulnerable non-refugee beneficiaries for targeted support in food-insecure areas.

27. UNICEF-targeted assistance activities covered the areas most affected by closures, demolitions, military incursions and the Barrier. Those activities included child protection, health and nutrition, education and adolescent development and participation. The annual ILO fact-finding mission took place during March and April of 2006 in order to better understand the prevailing socio-economic situation and its impact on workers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The results of the mission are to be published during the International Labour Conference in June 2006.

### **Human rights and women**

28. During the reporting period, OHCHR continued its technical assistance programme to support the development of a modern system of governance based on the rule of law, separation of powers and administration of justice, in accordance with international human rights standards, through capacity-building workshops and briefings with visiting independent experts. The Office also worked in partnership with non-governmental organizations and the Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizens' Rights (the national human rights institution) to promote human rights through the media, seminars and other joint activities. OHCHR initiated the formation of a United Nations Inter-Agency Human Rights Working Group to facilitate human rights mainstreaming across the work of all agencies. Training

workshops were carried with the Ministry for Women's Affairs. WHO worked in partnership with Palestinian and Israeli non-governmental organizations to advocate for the right to health and to access health services within the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

29. UNIFEM expanded its Sabaya programme, aimed at increasing the participation of Palestinian women in social, economic and political life. Originally targeting only the West Bank, the programme now also covers the Gaza Strip. A total of \$900,000 will be invested in 18 women's centres through a variety of initiatives related to education, health, economic security, leadership and empowerment. In addition, UNIFEM supported civil society initiatives to highlight honour crimes against women by advocating for changes in public attitudes and calling for changes to the penal code. The agency supported the Ministry of Women's Affairs in the development of a Palestinian Women's Bill of Rights, and supported dialogue between women's organizations and the Palestinian Authority. UNIFEM initiated a project to bring psychosocial and other counselling services providers to women's centres in rural communities. The overall investment of UNIFEM in women's rights activities was \$80,000.

30. The capacity-building initiatives of UNESCO included programming implemented in cooperation with the Ministry of Women's Affairs in the areas of girls' vocational counselling, academic assistance, and parental awareness of the importance of girls' education. The agency also supported the development of the Palestinian Women's Research and Documentation Centre, inaugurated in 2006, which conducted studies on women and poverty, the basic education system and the dimensions of women's empowerment. A branch of the centre will be established in Gaza in 2006. During the reporting period, UNFPA shifted some activities to incorporate humanitarian components such as emergency obstetric care, psychosocial counselling for young people and women, and community support groups working for women in isolated rural communities. UNRWA supported 46 community-based organizations, which encouraged women to play a more public role in society, and promoted enhanced management, finance and administration skills among refugee women. UNESCO worked to eliminate gender disparities in the education system by initiating a capacity-building programme with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, UNIFEM and the Ministry of Women's Affairs.

### **Safety and well-being of children**

31. The rights of Palestinian children to education, health, nutrition and play continued to be challenged. By July 2005, about 10 per cent of children under age 5 were stunted. The prevalence of violence in homes, schools and neighbourhoods remained an issue of particular concern. Restrictions on movement also continued to make access to health facilities, schools, and extra-curricular activities difficult. School enrolment data revealed a 2-per cent decline in enrolment for both girls and boys during the reporting period. Some 3.1 per cent of Palestinian children worked, with a third of those working instead of attending school.

32. During the reporting period more than 25 Palestinian children were killed and many more injured by live fire, heavy artillery, tank shells, shrapnel and missiles. In 2004 UNRWA decided to enhance the technical capacity of its Community Mental Health Programme, and recruited a specialist in protection to identify protection gaps. Over 2,700 refugee children and youth in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

received psychological counselling and support through UNRWA, and UNDP supported programmes aimed at increasing the resilience of children and youth who suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder and other forms of trauma. UNICEF and its non-governmental partners ran 12 psychosocial emergency teams to address the conflict-related distress of children and their caregivers. In total, 50,000 children attended UNICEF debriefing sessions in 2005 and 25,000 caregivers were trained.

33. In response to high levels of violence against children and women in homes, schools and communities, UNICEF and its governmental and non-governmental partners have implemented a comprehensive programme since 2004, including monitoring, law and policy development, awareness-raising, capacity-building and the setting up of response systems. UNICEF also supported the development of a draft juvenile justice law and a Palestinian child rights law. In addition, UNICEF provided support to the Ministry of Detainees Affairs in building a comprehensive database on Palestinian children held in Israeli detention. UNICEF and the Ministry of Planning also began establishing a national child protection monitoring system.

### **Youth**

34. Addressing the high percentage of unemployment among young people, UNDP continued to focus on building up the capacity of the youth network in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. UNRWA continued to assist refugee youth ages 15 to 24 through education, job creation, access to microcredit, and extra-curricular activities. In addition to the formalized education offered by UNRWA, more than 11,600 refugee children and youth took advantage of various training or tutoring and skills-building activities in computers, languages, leadership training, sports, theatre, music and summer and winter camps.

### **Millennium Development Goals**

35. During the reporting period, UNDP worked to promote the Millennium Development Goals agenda among United Nations agencies, Palestinian groups and international partners. The 2005 MDG Progress Report was prepared under the umbrella of the Palestinian National MDG Steering Committee and coordinated by UNDP. In addition, UNDP supported the efforts of the Ministry of Planning to align Palestinian medium-term development priorities with the Millennium Development Goals.

### **Environment**

36. During the period under review, UNDP worked to create a favourable environment for human development by addressing the importance of solid waste and medical waste management, as well as through capacity-building of the people working in such facilities. In December 2005, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) conducted an independent assessment of the environmental status of the disengaged Israeli settlements in Gaza. All 21 disengaged settlements in the Gaza Strip were covered, as well as the Erez industrial zone. Following the laboratory phase, the findings were released in March 2006. UNEP agreed with UNDP to provide training to Palestinians on ways to address the asbestos remaining in the rubble of the demolished houses in the disengaged settlements. UNEP also committed to provide the expertise needed to prepare a proposal, through UNDP, on

overall waste management throughout the Gaza Strip. Additional follow-up activities are being discussed.

## **B. Governance and institutional support**

### **Direct budget support**

37. A critical aspect of institutional support during the reporting period was the emergency financing of the Palestinian budget. Salary support was central, given the importance of public sector salaries for individual Palestinian livelihoods and the broader economy. The World Bank administered the multi-donor financial management-reform trust fund, which, as of February 2006, had disbursed over \$293 million in budget support to the Palestinian Authority. The World Bank's own operations included a number of emergency services support projects, designed to mitigate the deterioration in service provision by covering municipal services, water sewage, environmental management electricity, education, non-governmental organizations, community support, land administration, tertiary education, and the Social Safety Net Reform Project. On average, the Bank has leveraged about \$2.4 in donor funds for every \$1 from its own resources.

### **Capacity-building**

38. According to the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, \$15.8 million was invested by United Nations agencies in technical assistance and capacity-building activities directly benefiting the Palestinian Authority. The UNDP Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals programme sent Palestinian experts to the Palestinian Authority, private sector and non-governmental organizations. The programme was utilized for capacity-building of the Prime Minister's Office and seven ministries. UNDP gave financial and technical support to the Palestinian Central Elections Commission and the Palestinian Legislative Council elections in January 2006. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) continued to provide the Palestinian Authority and civil society with a range of technical assistance, advisory services and capacity-building projects, covering areas such as development strategies and economic management, trade policy, investment retention, public debt management and trade facilitation. The resource mobilization efforts of ILO ensured continued operation of the Palestinian Fund for Employment and Social Protection.

39. ESCWA organized a series of training courses for staff of the Palestine Standards Institution, relevant ministries and private sector entities in order to improve practices in the areas of standardization, technical regulation and inspection. Another ESCWA training course for the personnel of the Ministry of National Economy was held to enhance the Ministry's capacity in packaging practical development projects. ILO, in cooperation with the Palestinian Federation of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture, organized a workshop on the importance of small and medium enterprises. Training workshops were held in the West Bank and Gaza covering the issues of child labour, social security, occupational safety and health, capacity-building of trade unions, employment policy and industrial relations. A technical advisory mission also reviewed the organization, role, scope, and function of the Ministry of Labour.

40. In November 2005, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime convened a meeting between law enforcement and drug control agencies from Israel and the Palestinian Authority, where the two sides discussed collaborative arrangements to review the situation regarding trafficking of drugs and related activities. In January 2006 the Office on Drugs and Crime launched a programme to provide technical assistance to the Palestinian Authority in order to prevent drug abuse, trafficking and other related crimes. Following the Israeli disengagement from Gaza, the UNCTAD project for modernizing customs enabled the Palestinian Authority to fully deploy sovereign customs operations at the Palestinian-Egyptian border at Rafah.

41. UNIFEM worked with the Ministry of Women's Affairs in drafting the chapter on gender equality in the Palestinian Millennium Development Goals report and common country assessment document. UNIFEM, in cooperation with UNDP, provided technical support to the Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Technology to develop the Palestinian information and communications technology sector through the mobilization of women graduates. In January 2006, ESCWA supported the Ministry of Women's Affairs by organizing a series of training workshops focusing on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Using the action plan developed by the Ministry of Local Governance, UNDP assisted in preparations for decentralization and assisted with the establishment of gender units in 15 line ministries.

42. On judicial and legislative reforms, UNICEF supported the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Social Affairs and specialized non-governmental organizations in reviewing the draft juvenile justice law. It also supported amendments to the 2005 Palestinian Child Law by initiating a broad-based consultation process. In addition, UNICEF launched a training programme on issues relating to the prevention of abuse in schools and supported the development of professional standards for psychosocial workers. OHCHR worked with the police academies in Jericho and Gaza to integrate human rights into the training curriculum and provided intensive training of trainer courses. The Director General of Palestinian Reform and Rehabilitation Centres agreed to similar programmes regarding training of trainers for prison personnel. Under an agreement with the Attorney General, training on human rights for prosecutors was initiated. UNDP continued the construction of courthouses and the building of the Ministry of Justice.

43. UNICEF also worked with the Ministry of Health to align health budgets towards priority interventions in line with the Millennium Development Goals and to streamline socially responsible budgeting. During the reporting period, UNICEF supported the unification and harmonization of health information systems in key areas such as maternal and child health, epidemiological surveillance, school health and immunization.

44. In other technical areas, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) assisted with agricultural pest control. The Ministry of Agriculture continued receiving technical support to control and monitor the Mediterranean fruit fly population in the Gaza Strip. IAEA also supported the Palestinian Authority's radiation protection service as well as scholarships to the regional post-graduate diploma courses on radiation protection and safety of radiation sources, held in Damascus.



### **Culture**

45. UNESCO completed the Inventory of Palestinian cultural and natural heritage sites of potential outstanding universal value, presented during the 29th Session of the World Heritage Committee held in Durban, South Africa, in July 2005. The agency completed a comparative study on the cultural policies of the region. Maintenance and rehabilitation work on the Ramallah Archaeological Museum and other key sites were also initiated. Finally, UNESCO provided technical assistance to the Ministry of Culture in the preparation of proclaiming the traditional telling of folktales a “masterpiece of oral and intangible heritage of humanity”.

### **Media**

46. UNESCO provided technical and legal assistance to the Ministry of Information in drafting new media legislation. The agency also organized workshops on election reporting and coverage. A multimedia centre and a studio for children’s programmes were established at the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation and staff training was organized.

## **C. Development of the private sector**

47. The UNRWA microfinance programme has invested over \$100 million in the Palestinian economy over the past 15 years through more than 100,000 microenterprise loans. In 2005 it financed half of all loans provided by the microfinance sector to Palestinian microenterprise, through 17,700 loans valued at \$16.69 million. Some 30 per cent of these were loans to women microentrepreneurs working in the informal sector of the economy. Earlier in 2005, UNRWA introduced a \$1.50 million pilot project in Gaza to provide microfinance for housing.

48. ILO began developing a joint programme with the Young Entrepreneurs Palestine, a Palestinian non-governmental organization, and the Negev Institute for Strategies of Peace and Development to promote work through micro and small enterprise development. ILO programmes also fostered personal entrepreneurial competencies. The World Bank’s policy support and technical analysis led to the Joint Palestinian-Israeli Investors’ Declaration presented in London in December 2005. UNICEF supported a salt plant located in Jericho to increase the production and quality of iodized salt. Sustainability was ensured by successfully streamlining iodized salt into the local market in partnership with agencies such as WFP. UNCTAD worked with private sector counterparts to establish the Palestinian Shippers Council in order to enhance the capacity of exporters and importers to effectively deal with shipping and transport intermediaries. With funding from ILO, UNCTAD implemented entrepreneur training workshops for approximately 100 small- and medium-sized entrepreneurs. During 2005, ESCWA launched the follow-up and implementation phase of the Arab-International Forum on Rehabilitation and Development in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

## **D. United Nations emergency assistance**

49. Ongoing political uncertainty and economic hardship meant that a large proportion of United Nations assistance to the Occupied Palestinian Territory was directed towards emergency response. Operations were frequently affected by

restrictions on the movement of goods and personnel. As the political situation appeared to improve in the first months of 2005, the increasing attention of donors to medium-term assistance agendas resulted in a relative decline in support for emergency programmes. Political developments in the beginning of 2006, however, put funding for long-term development and support for Palestinian Authority capacity-building into question.

#### **Emergency food and agriculture support**

50. According to UNRWA, approximately 65 per cent of refugees in the Occupied Palestinian Territory received food support (75,000 families in the West Bank, and 135,000 in Gaza Strip). Restrictions on movement and declining donor support during 2005, however, required UNRWA to scale back its core provisions. In September 2005, WFP started its first Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation to provide direct food support to 480,000 non-refugee Palestinians, support livelihoods and prevent a decline in the nutritional status of the most food-insecure Palestinians. In 2005 WFP began addressing its humanitarian access problems in Gaza through purchasing 93 per cent of its food commodities locally. Between 1 April 2004 and 31 March 2005, WFP delivered over 70,000 metric tonnes of food aid, at a total expense of \$35 million.

51. A FAO emergency project valued at \$1 million provided agricultural inputs and equipment to vulnerable farmers, as well as numerous training courses for technicians and farmers on greenhouse construction and management and improved cultivation methods. UNDP financed the rehabilitation of destroyed agricultural assets in the northern Gaza Strip, the construction of greenhouses, cold storages, poultry and livestock farms and wells. In the West Bank, UNDP assisted in land reclamation and cultivation in several areas. UNDP and FAO together promoted several agricultural projects covering the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and directly addressed critical situations such as the Barrier, land confiscation, destroyed crops, reduced rangeland, and the disengagement from Gaza.

#### **Emergency employment support**

52. The UNRWA job creation programme prioritized refugees with large families, supporting livelihoods with a remuneration of \$10 to \$12 per day per worker (an average of \$2 per dependant per day). Employment programmes contributed to the repair of refugee camps infrastructure and the renovation of Agency facilities. In the Gaza Strip, over 24,000 people were temporarily employed, supporting over 186,000 dependants. In the West Bank, UNRWA also provided emergency direct employment to a total number of 4,500 refugees, benefiting 25,500 dependants. UNDP spent \$28 million on emergency employment programmes. WFP provided food-for-work and food-for-training support for 39,700 workers from recently impoverished households, benefiting some 238,000 family members. ILO activities stimulated employment and income generation opportunities for 140 unemployed new graduates from the Palestinian industrial/vocational schools: 55 per cent of the graduates received permanent jobs.

### **Emergency health support**

53. Continued closure within and between the territories severely challenged the Palestinian health system's ability to function at appropriate levels. The continuous closure of the Karni crossing also posed a risk for the availability of drugs. The referral system was hampered causing difficulties for patients from within the seam zone to enter the West Bank for medical attention in hospitals. Those difficulties were experienced by patients trying to access health facilities as well as by health professionals trying to reach their places of work. The procurement and delivery of cold chain equipments for needy clinics and districts was completed and 150 maternal and child health clinics were upgraded with medical equipment for implementing better quality child health and prenatal care by UNICEF. Some 50 clinics received equipment for health education and community awareness creation. Four new clinics in the former enclaves of Gaza and two new clinics in the West Bank were fully equipped for maternal and child health services.

54. UNRWA continued to run five mobile units as a continued response to restrictions on freedom of movement caused by closures and the building of the Barrier. A total of 136,000 patients were seen in 2005 at a cost of \$2 million. In Gaza, during the Israeli disengagement, 8 medical teams were fully equipped, 60 volunteers were trained in first aid procedures and communities were mobilized on proper hygiene practices and the importance of breastfeeding. UNICEF also provided basic medical supplies, midwifery kits, family water kits, generators and other non-food items, and, in partnership with the Palestinian Red Crescent Society, ensured continuous delivery of health services in the enclaved areas, notably in the northern areas of the West Bank. Micronutrient supplements were procured and delivered to the central stores. Given the volatile situation emergency preparedness planning and the preposition of critical supplies for basic health continued. Besides routine services, an immunization campaign for measles, mumps and rubella for 600,000 children was planned in Gaza during the spring of 2006.

### **Emergency education support**

55. UNICEF continued its emergency education assistance to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Approximately \$940,000 worth of education equipment was provided to Palestinian Authority-administered schools during the disengagement in Gaza. Training courses were also organized for teachers. UNDP continued the construction and rehabilitation of schools and classrooms and sanitary facilities for schools as emergency humanitarian assistance. At the time of the present report, 26 schools were under construction. ILO spent \$1.5 million towards the establishment of a vocational training centre for the disabled in Hebron, to be fully operational in the beginning of 2007.

### **Emergency infrastructure support**

56. Israeli military incursions and house demolitions continued in 2005, causing damage or destruction to Palestinian property (homes, shelters, commercial) in 389 recorded incidents. Some 286 structures were demolished and 103 sustained damages. Of the total incidents 66 per cent occurred in the Gaza Strip, the damage notably caused by missiles, and 25 per cent occurred in Nablus. A total of 1,150 Palestinians were recorded displaced. Those numbers are conservative, however, since data on displaced people are often not available.

57. Emergency infrastructure programmes implemented by UNDP covered a wide range of public services and municipal utilities, community centres, schools, hospitals, clinics, roads, sanitation systems and water treatment facilities. Expenditure amounted to \$49 million. UNDP also provided housing to non-refugee Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.

## **E. Coordination of United Nations assistance**

58. The Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process continued its coordination of United Nations assistance to the Palestinian people and its representation of the United Nations system at donor forums. In 2005, the Office participated in the review and redesign of the local coordination structures and under this framework, assumed new responsibilities as co-chair of the Social Development and Humanitarian Strategy group. It also participated in the December 2005 meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee on Assistance to the Palestinians, held in London. Locally, the Office convened regular coordination meetings of United Nations agencies and several extraordinary meetings on issues of special policy interest to the United Nations. Throughout the reporting period, the Office served as the focal point for coordination between the United Nations system and the office of the Quartet Special Envoy for Disengagement.

59. In the second half of 2005, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs led in the preparation of the 2006 consolidated appeals process, under which a total of over \$215 million was requested to finance activities for 12 agencies and 9 non-governmental organizations. Prior to the appeal, the Office conducted a needs analysis, that focused on life-saving humanitarian needs such as improving availability of food, emergency employment of vulnerable households, enhancing access to health services and improving the awareness of the root causes of the humanitarian situation.

60. The Government of Japan, through the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security, started funding a project supporting isolated and disenfranchised communities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, with a budget of \$5.3 million, to be implemented jointly by several United Nations agencies. The Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process served as local focal point for the coordination of Trust Fund activities. UNIFEM began supporting training for field researchers involved in the coordination of humanitarian affairs on gender as a research tool, in order to ensure gender sensitization.

61. WHO and FAO chaired the United Nations Crisis Management Team for Avian Influenza that developed a United Nations staff contingency plan.

### **Humanitarian access**

62. In 2005, ambulance operators reported a total of 162 access incidents in which the provision of first aid and/or medical evacuations was delayed, obstructed and/or prevented by Israeli security forces. Similarly in 2005, relief agencies filed reports of some 778 incidents in which the delivery of aid and/or the movement of personnel were obstructed by Israeli authorities. Access of humanitarian personnel via the Erez crossing remained problematic, and the planned completion of the

Barrier around Jerusalem raised the prospect of problems of access for over 400 United Nations staff in the long term.

#### **United Nations media and public information activities**

63. United Nations agencies continued to work closely with international and local media to draw attention to and provide information on the situation of the Palestinian people and United Nations responses in the region. The United Nations Advocacy and Public Information Committee coordinated by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process highlighted pressing humanitarian issues to the media and provided maps, reports and facts sheets before and during the disengagement period.

#### **United Nations and the civil society dimension**

64. ESCWA, in partnership with the Arab NGO Network for development, and the Palestinian NGO Network established the Arab-Palestinian Civil Society Organizations Coalition. A regional meeting was held with the participation of major Arab and Palestinian civil society entities and networks.

### **IV. Donor response to the crisis**

#### **A. Emergency budget and fiscal support**

65. The Palestinian Authority's fiscal deficit widened substantially in 2005. Revenues increased by \$278 million to reach over \$1.2 billion in 2005, about 27.5 per cent of GDP, mostly reflecting increased indirect tax receipts — collected by the Government of Israel and transferred to the Palestinian Authority — resulting from higher oil prices, as well as exceptional profits transfers from Palestinian Authority-owned corporations and administrative improvements.

66. Expenditures also increased by \$466 million to reach almost \$2 billion, owing to large salary increases and a further rise in Palestinian Authority employment, to higher social transfers and increased operating expenditures. Net lending increased to over twice the budget allocation, to cover shortfalls in the recovery of higher costs by energy enterprises and municipalities.<sup>8</sup> Consequently, the budget deficit reached \$762 million in 2005, or 17 per cent of GDP, compared to \$574 million in 2004. Only \$349 million in external budget support was received,<sup>9</sup> roughly half of what was foreseen in the budget. The resulting fiscal gap was financed mainly by advances from the Palestine Investment Fund and increased borrowing from domestic banks — often collateralized with assets of the Fund. The fiscal situation is expected to become even more precarious in 2006, particularly as donor assistance and the transfer of indirect tax revenue by the Government of Israel have become uncertain in the wake of the Palestinian Legislative Council elections.

## **B. Support for Palestinian reform**

67. The Task Force on Palestinian Reform continued to monitor and support the Palestinian reform process in the areas of elections, financial accountability, the judicial sector and rule of law, legislation, market economy, local government and public administration. The Task Force worked with the Palestinian Authority Reform Coordination Support Unit to implement its donor supported one-year reform action plan until the end of 2005, when it was formally wound down and absorbed into a new donor coordination structure under the leadership of the European Commission.

68. Much progress was made with regard to electoral and financial reform, whereas judicial and legislative efforts fell short of expectations. A series of municipal elections and legislative elections were successfully held during the reporting period. Despite improvements with financial management, salaries in the education and security sectors increased and progress on retirements and personnel turnover stalled. As a result, a number of donors began revising their aid to the Palestinian Authority. Continued corruption, lack of will on the part of some politicians and external forces that included stringent Israeli security measures, all served to limit the functional authority of the Palestinian Authority and to stifle the growth and reform of public institutions.

69. While donors remained interested in preserving mechanisms for distributing humanitarian and emergency support, political and legal restrictions for providing institutional support prompted a donor-wide review following the legislative elections. As the new Palestinian Legislative Council took power, efforts were being made to identify certain institutions such as the Judiciary and Presidency in order to facilitate disbursements of donor funds that would be beyond the control of the new Palestinian legislature. The Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process led the United Nations community efforts in that effort.

## **C. Donor coordination**

70. Throughout 2005, the donor community, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and the Quartet Special Envoy for Disengagement worked closely to implement the recommendations of the London meeting of 1 March 2005. Local donor coordination structures were significantly revised in order to simplify the aid management process, strengthen the strategic quality of donor discussions, and secure closer involvement of the Palestinian Authority. Four strategy groups were created, to cover governance, economic policy, infrastructure and social development/humanitarian affairs. The future workplan of the groups, and related decisions about the allocation of aid, remained contingent upon the donor programme review initiated in February 2006.

## **V. Challenges ahead**

71. The overall situation during the reporting period was characterized by uncertainty and failed expectations. It remains to be seen whether the parties will seek to overcome the obstacles that currently exist and explore the possibility of negotiations, or whether other approaches will come to dominate.

72. Despite an apparent stabilization of the economy and growth in private sector activities after 2003, all Palestinians did not benefit comprehensively or equitably. Looking ahead, the numbers of chronically poor are likely to increase, and public institutions to weaken, if major disruptions of aid flows take place. It is not yet clear if the Palestinian Authority will be able to pay the salaries of the approximately 152,000 Palestinians it employs, including 73,000 security personnel. Public sector employees now make up 37 per cent of all employed in Gaza and 14 per cent of all employed in the West Bank. Their spending power in local shops and services plays an increasingly important role in keeping the local economy afloat. An estimated 25 per cent of the total Palestinian population is dependent on a Palestinian Authority wage-earner.

73. The donor community is searching for ways to maintain vital support for the Palestinian people while, at the same time, pressing the Palestinian Authority to accede to the Quartet's three principles, namely a recognition of Israel's right to exist, a renunciation of violence, and the acknowledgement of previous international agreements. While donors remain committed to averting a new socio-economic crisis in the territory, Palestinian Authority institutions are facing a serious fiscal threat, and the prospect of a temporary international disengagement.

74. In operational terms, closures, security restrictions and continued challenges to United Nations privileges and immunities by the Government of Israel are likely to strain implementation of programmes. Agencies, with support from their headquarters, will need to adopt a more robust common approach to access.

## **VI. Observations**

75. The period under review was one of rapid change in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Disengagement from Gaza and parts of the West Bank, and the election of new governments in both Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory, have transformed the political terrain. Terrorism and violence continued, construction of the Barrier proceeded apace, and restrictions continued on the movement of Palestinians in the wake of the Palestinian legislative elections. Prospects of negotiations between the parties appeared to recede in the early months of 2006.

76. Significant financial support from the international community will be needed in order to avoid further degradations in the quality of life within the Occupied Palestinian Territory, a contraction in the Palestinian economy and an attendant increase in socio-economic and humanitarian needs of the Palestinian population, and to maintain a basis for long-term economic recovery. The Government of Israel, which stated in January 2006 that it would interrupt transfers of the Palestinian value-added taxes and customs taxes it collects on the behalf of the Palestinian Authority, is strongly encouraged to resume payments through an appropriate mechanism. The Palestinian Authority, for its part, should comply with the three conditions of the Quartet. This would also enable the international community to contribute more to the alleviation of the humanitarian and economic situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

77. In that context, the assumption of a transition towards medium- and longer-term development planning, which had underpinned most international aid strategies in 2005, was set aside. Nonetheless, and despite significantly scaled-down planning

time frames, the United Nations system maintained its full commitment to assisting Palestinians, and worked closely with donors to maintain the continuity of its programmes and to preserve, to the extent possible, the essential social functions of the Palestinian Authority.

78. It will be critical in the months ahead that United Nations agencies be able to quickly and adequately address needs through established mechanisms such as the consolidated appeals process, while continuing to pursue the broader aim of the United Nations, the Quartet and the entire international community: the realization of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East, based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 1397 (2002) and 1515 (2003), and the establishment of a sovereign, democratic, viable and contiguous Palestinian State living side-by-side in peace with a secure Israel.

#### Notes

- <sup>1</sup> See S/PRST/2006/6 of 3 February 2006.
- <sup>2</sup> World Bank, "West Bank and Gaza Economic Update and Potential Outlook", 15 March 2006.
- <sup>3</sup> World Food Programme Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping Branch, "Food insecurity in the West Bank and Gaza Strip 2005/2006".
- <sup>4</sup> Graduate Institute for Development Studies (IUED), Public Perception Poll No. 9, as reported in *Palestinian Public Perceptions, Report IX*, October 2005.
- <sup>5</sup> The Rafah crossing was closed for 91 days (25 per cent of the year) prior to December 2005 when management of the crossing was formally handed to the PA under the provisions of the Agreement on Movement and Access. This transfer was made possible by the deployment of European Union technical teams to the Rafah crossing on 18 December 2005.
- <sup>6</sup> *Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*. See A/ES-10/273 and Corr.1.
- <sup>7</sup> ESCWA input was acknowledged by the Ministry of Planning in the Palestinian Medium-term Development Plan 2006-2008.
- <sup>8</sup> This included the need to cover non-payment of utility bills by consumers; increased electricity generation by the Gaza power plant using relatively expensive fuel oil; and subsidies on petroleum product prices.
- <sup>9</sup> Donor support came mainly from Arab donors, including Algeria, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, and from the World Bank-administered public financial management reform trust fund.





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**Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian  
and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations,  
including special economic assistance**

**Economic and Social Council**

**Substantive session of 2007**

Geneva, 2-27 July 2007

Item 9 of the provisional agenda\*\*

**Implementation of the Declaration on the  
Granting of Independence to Colonial  
Countries and Peoples by the specialized  
agencies and the international institutions  
associated with the United Nations**

## Assistance to the Palestinian People

### Report of the Secretary-General

#### *Summary*

During the period under review, the Palestinian economy suffered a significant decline and the socio-economic and humanitarian conditions of the population worsened. Many donors reviewed their assistance policy to the Palestinian Authority, in the context of the three principles spelled out by the Middle East Quartet in January 2006. At the same time, the Government of Israel continued to withhold the payment of the tax revenues it collects on behalf of the Palestinian Authority, with the exception of one transfer early in 2007. As a result, and despite increased levels of aid, the Palestinian Authority has been facing a worsening fiscal crisis, which has exacerbated the already precarious situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

These developments occurred against the backdrop of continuing violence between Israelis and Palestinians, as well as among Palestinians, that claimed innocent lives on both sides. The reporting period was notably marked by the capture of an Israeli soldier by Palestinian militants, the continuation of Palestinian attacks against Israeli civilians, in particular the firing of rockets from the Gaza Strip, Israeli military reprisals conducted in Palestinian civilian areas, the continuation of a tight closure policy by the Israeli authorities, the partial implementation of the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access, the resumption of direct contacts between

\* A/62/50.

\*\* E/2007/100.



Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, and the formation of the Palestinian Government of National Unity.

The present report contains a description of efforts made by United Nations agencies, in cooperation with Palestinian and donor counterparts, to support the Palestinian civilian populations and institutions.

## I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 61/135 of 14 December 2006, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its sixty-second session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution. The reporting period was from May 2006 to April 2007.

2. Information on the living and socio-economic conditions of the Palestinian people is provided in reports prepared by other United Nations agencies, in particular in (a) the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan (A/61/67-E/2006/13); (b) the annual report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East;<sup>1</sup> and (c) the Humanitarian Monitor reports of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

3. Throughout the reporting period, the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority continued his efforts to support the peace process and to ensure effective coordination between the Palestinian Authority, the United Nations, the international community and the Government of Israel, as well as to document the economic and social conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

4. The present report provides an overview of the work of the United Nations agencies, in cooperation with Palestinian and donor counterparts, to assist the Palestinian people and institutions, as described in General Assembly resolution 61/135. Also included are observations of the political climate and related challenges as the international community responds to the crisis and works to end the cycle of violence, alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people, and move forward towards a peaceful settlement.

## II. Overview of the current situation

### A. Political

5. The reporting period was dominated by a review of diplomatic contacts and international financing arrangements with the Palestinian Authority following the January 2006 legislative elections, including a redirection of aid through the Office of the President and humanitarian channels. On 30 January 2006, the Middle East Quartet concluded “that it was inevitable that future assistance to any new Government would be reviewed by donors against that Government’s commitment to the principles of non-violence, recognition of Israel and acceptance of previous agreements and obligations, including the road map”.

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<sup>1</sup> *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-first Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/61/13).*

6. On 9 May 2006, following the formation of a Hamas-led Palestinian Authority Government, the Quartet expressed “its willingness to endorse a temporary international mechanism that is limited in scope and duration, operates with full transparency and accountability, and ensures direct delivery of assistance to the Palestinian people”. The European Commission took the lead in establishing the mechanism, which began operating in July 2006. In March, the mechanism was renewed until June 2007. For its part, Israel suspended the transfer of most Palestinian customs and tax revenues collected on behalf of the Palestinian Authority. However, following a meeting between Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert in December 2006, Israel authorized a one-off transfer of \$100 million to Presidential accounts.

7. Repeated attempts were made to overcome this impasse by reaching an accord on a national unity Government. These efforts were complicated, however, by the capture of an Israeli soldier by Palestinian militants in June 2006, a sustained three-month Israeli military campaign in Gaza, and the continuation of rocket fire at Israeli territory from the Gaza Strip.

8. The tensions between the main Palestinian factions escalated to armed confrontations. Following an intense round of intra-Palestinian violence in Gaza in December 2006 and January 2007 that threatened to degenerate into civil war, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia invited Palestinian leaders to Mecca, Saudi Arabia, where an agreement was reached on 8 February to end factional violence and form a national unity Government. That agreement, and the subsequent formation of the Palestinian Government of National Unity, calmed the situation, though clan feuds have continued in Gaza, where law and order are yet to be fully restored and the firing of rockets into Israel is yet to be halted. A British journalist, Alan Johnston, was abducted on 12 March 2007. The stated platform of the Government did not explicitly commit to the principles spelled out by the Quartet, but it nevertheless constituted a step forward. As it came into office, the new Government faced many daunting tasks, including a fiscal crisis, the restoration of law and order, the cessation of rocket fire into Israel, and negotiations for the release of the captured Israeli soldier.

9. During the reporting period, the Israel-Hizbullah conflict in Lebanon and its political fallout brought to a halt any Israeli attempts to implement a unilateral withdrawal from parts of the West Bank. Settlement activity and construction of the barrier continued in the West Bank, as did Israeli incursions into population centres. Efforts from December 2006 onwards to bring about political progress through dialogue between President Abbas and Prime Minister Olmert brought few immediate results.

10. Throughout this period of crisis, the United Nations consistently emphasized its support for the formation of a national unity government, whose platform reflected Quartet principles, while calling on both parties to implement their obligations under the road map and supporting efforts to resume political dialogue. The United Nations strongly advocated for all parties to adhere to their obligations under international humanitarian law regarding the use of force and the protection of civilians. Through the Quartet and other channels, the United Nations worked to facilitate the release of Palestinian customs and tax revenues through agreed mechanisms, and encouraged the international community to continue to assist Palestinians in need.

## **B. Humanitarian and socio-economic context**

### **Economic and fiscal developments**

11. After a modest recovery between 2003 and 2005, the Palestinian economy suffered another decline in 2006. Real gross domestic product (GDP) fell by 5 to 10 per cent in 2006, and income per capita dipped to almost 40 per cent below its 1999 level.

12. The Palestinian Authority experienced a severe fiscal crisis. Total resources fell by almost 40 per cent, from \$2.1 billion in 2005 to \$1.3 billion in 2006, reflecting the suspension of direct assistance by most donors and the withholding of clearance revenues by Israel. Also, commercial banks reduced the stock of their loans to the Palestinian Authority because of risks of litigation abroad. Meanwhile, the wage bill continued to expand and by early 2007 exceeded the value of revenues, including those still withheld by Israel. The overall fiscal deficit reached almost \$1 billion in 2006, up from \$760 million in 2005. As a result, the Palestinian Authority accumulated up to \$900 million in salary, non-salary and pension-fund arrears. Government employees received on average only about 50 to 60 per cent of their regular incomes.

13. Official and private financial flows from abroad helped prevent a much sharper decline in incomes and consumption in 2006, thus cushioning the overall contraction. External budget support through Palestinian Presidential accounts doubled in 2006, reaching almost \$750 million. Humanitarian assistance increased by 56 per cent over the previous year. However, a decline in private investment, from an already low base, signalled a further hollowing out of the Palestinian economy and an increase in its dependency on foreign assistance and remittances.

### **Humanitarian and socio-economic developments**

14. Levels of violence remained high during the reporting period. Two major prolonged Israeli military operations into the Gaza Strip in July and November 2006 were highly destructive. Rockets continued being fired from the Gaza Strip into Israeli territory, and attacks against Israeli civilians were carried out by Palestinian militants, though in a lesser number than in the past. However, there was a marked decline in the Palestinian-Israeli violence in Gaza since the ceasefire of 26 November 2006. In addition, conflict among Palestinian factions and private militias intensified. Overall, 900 Palestinians (146 children) and 16 Israelis (no children) were killed during the reporting period, and a further 4,507 Palestinians and 255 Israelis were injured.

15. Despite increases in financial and emergency assistance, humanitarian indicators continued to worsen, owing to a combination of ongoing closures and the inability of the Palestinian Authority to meet the public wage bill. By April 2007, an estimated 66 per cent of Palestinians were living in poverty, a 30 per cent increase from 2005. One third of the Palestinians were food insecure and a quarter unemployed. The situation was particularly severe in Gaza, where 80 per cent of the population relied on United Nations food aid, and 88 per cent lived below the official poverty line of \$2.20 per day.

16. The intensification of closures was reflected in the failure to meet agreed targets under the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access. Between 25 June and

31 December 2006, the Rafah crossing between the Gaza Strip and Egypt was mainly closed. Improvements began in the first quarter of 2007, with the crossing open for up to 27 per cent of scheduled opening hours. The Karni crossing, the main commercial transit point between Gaza and Israel, operated at only a fraction of the Agreement targets during the reporting period. Here again, export levels improved in the first quarter of 2007, but rarely exceeded 10 per cent of the Agreement target of 400 trucks per day. Worker movement through the Erez crossing to Israel has halted since the January 2006 elections.

17. There was no progress on construction of a seaport or airport, or on the establishment of a link between the West Bank and Gaza, and, despite Israeli Prime Minister Olmert's commitment to Palestinian President Abbas to ease movement restrictions in the West Bank, there has been no discernible improvement in movement for Palestinians in the West Bank. According to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the number of road obstacles to movement in the West Bank continues to climb, currently standing at 529.

#### **Barrier**

18. On 9 July 2004, the International Court of Justice rendered an advisory opinion stating that the construction of the barrier "constitutes breaches by Israel of several of its obligations under the applicable international humanitarian law and human rights instruments".<sup>2</sup> On 20 July 2004, the General Assembly acknowledged the Court's advisory opinion in its resolution ES-10/15, and requested the Secretary-General to establish a register of damage. By its resolution ES-10/17 of 15 December 2006, the Assembly authorized the establishment of the United Nations Register of Damage caused by the Construction of the Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. In accordance with the resolution, the Office of the Register of Damage and the Register of Damage itself are to be established and to become operational within six months of the adoption of the resolution.

19. The Government of Israel continued its construction of the barrier in the West Bank. By April 2007, approximately 58 per cent of the total planned 703 km of the barrier route had been completed.

### **III. United Nations response**

20. In a modified political environment, United Nations agencies and programmes have continued to discharge their responsibilities, to the best of their abilities, in keeping with their respective mandates. In so doing, they have continued to interact with their Palestinian Authority counterparts to ensure that the needs of the Palestinian people are met as effectively as possible.

#### **A. Human, social and community development**

21. Throughout the reporting period, regular development cooperation activities, grounded in long-term donor investments, took a back seat to emergency and life-sustaining interventions. Nonetheless, where possible, United Nations agencies and

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<sup>2</sup> *Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*; see A/ES-10/273 and Corr.1.

programmes sought out opportunities to continue longer-term economic, infrastructure, capacity-building, and service delivery interventions in their respective sectors of specialization.

### **Education**

22. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) continued operating 272 elementary and preparatory schools for refugee children, using the Palestinian Authority curriculum and additional instruction material on human rights. The Agency constructed 105 computer laboratories and employed 190 information technology teachers in the occupied Palestinian territory. Nine school counsellors supported over 23,000 students. In the West Bank, specific attention was devoted to awareness-raising about violence against children. UNRWA provided teacher training to 645 trainees at four training centres. A new training centre in Gaza was expected to accommodate an additional 118 trainees during 2007.

23. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) carried out the third Back-to-School campaign for the 2006/07 school year, reaching 1 million children. UNICEF provided mathematics and science kits to 500 schools. UNICEF also provided psychosocial counselling to some 60,000 children, and began a programme to strengthen education information management systems. UNESCO also assisted in the preparation of the new Five-Year Education Plan (2007-2011) of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, while the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) assisted the Ministry to implement the World Programme for Human Rights Education, focusing on primary and secondary level schools in the first phase. The World Food Programme (WFP) supported adult education among 13,400 of the poorest Palestinians, in order to enhance quality of life and income opportunities.

24. In higher education, the World Bank invested \$10 million to improve the efficiency, quality, relevance and regulatory environment of tertiary education institutions. UNESCO managed a programme of grants and scholarships valued at over \$15 million, distributed across 35 universities and colleges across the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

### **Health**

25. In the light of many donors' inability to provide direct financing to the Ministry of Health during the reporting period, the World Health Organization (WHO) led a comprehensive stakeholder review of the health situation to identify options that would avert a health crisis in a weakening institutional context. WHO, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and UNICEF collaborated in producing the monthly report on health sector surveillance indicators, which monitored comprehensively the health condition of Palestinians, and the status of health services. WHO also invested \$3.25 million in key areas such as nutrition, mental health, maternal and child health, communicable and non-communicable diseases and food safety. UNICEF met all Ministry of Health vaccine requirements under the national immunization plan for 2006, and provided essential equipment and training for 17 hospitals in the area of mother and child health, and trained 183

Ministry of Health staff in the integrated management of child health. WFP provided monthly food supplies to eight public hospitals in Gaza during the reporting period. Under a new programme, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) provided technical resources and training to the Ministry of Health on substance abuse and related HIV/AIDS prevention.

26. Health coverage for refugees was ensured by UNRWA, which continued to operate 55 health facilities across the occupied Palestinian territory at a cost of \$48 million, and through which over 4.7 million consultations were carried out. UNRWA continued its Family Health Programme, immunizing some 99 per cent of refugee children, and delivering food supplements to pregnant and nursing women. Three new hospitals were contracted by the Agency to mitigate the impact of movement restrictions in the West Bank.

### **Agriculture**

27. In the area of agriculture and rural development, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) assisted in technical extension and training for agricultural production and marketing, in irrigation and greenhouse rehabilitation, land reclamation and water resource management, and in the improvement of livestock production, crops and orchards. FAO also supported the development of backyard gardening and cottage industries for women, and provided technical assistance in integrated pest management and for avian influenza preparedness and response. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) focused on rural land development, road construction, production inputs for farmers, irrigation schemes, and rehabilitation of damaged infrastructure, generating some 17,500 temporary rural jobs in the process. FAO, together with WFP, led in the production of agriculture and food security surveys. WFP also directly assisted some 94,000 of the poorest farmers with livelihood support.

### **Multi-sector assistance**

28. The largest multi-sector portfolio was carried out by the World Bank. This consisted of 11 projects reflecting a multi-annual commitment of \$177.8 million. Large components of this investment were directed towards municipal services, NGO support, and integrated community development. UNDP invested \$30 million in community development programmes for local authorities in rural and urban areas, with an emphasis on empowering vulnerable groups.

29. The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) focused on strengthening community-based women's organizations and groups and made use of UNDP-built community infrastructure in 18 rural locations to provide specialized service and training for 10,000 rural Palestinian women. Activities included support for women-run enterprises, vocational training, initiatives to keep girls in school, and facilitating rural women's access to health and other services.

30. UNESCO assisted directly in the conservation and management of archaeological sites of universal value, such as Hisham's Palace in Jericho, and in urban planning for historic city centres in Nablus and Bethlehem. These activities were meant to protect the West Bank's threatened cultural landscape, for the benefit of local communities and businesses, and for recreational use.



31. During 2006 the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) undertook an urban sector profile study to identify the needs and priorities in the Palestinian urban communities and identified a number of potential projects in the various urban sectors. Based on a broad participatory process, the study identified priority interventions to be integrated into a long-term strategy for sustainable urban development. In addition, UN-Habitat began a \$6.3-million project to build improved 100 housing units for poor women and their children, and to create income-generating projects in Hebron.

### **Youth**

32. With an estimated 56 per cent of the Palestinian population under the age of 19, support for youth and adolescence was an integral part of United Nations activities during the reporting period. This acquired an added importance in view of the intensified significant strains on households, schools and the labour market. UNICEF supported a wide range of interventions, including life-skills training to over 250 Palestinian schools, psychosocial work, recreational activities, youth-oriented publications and television, and support for “child municipal councils” involving the participation of 16,000 adolescents. As part of this effort, UNFPA supported training of adolescents in peer counselling, and worked to expand young people’s access to reproductive health and HIV/AIDS prevention training. For its part, UNDP focused on youth employment, by investing in the placement of 4,500 youth in jobs in the private sector and civil society organizations. For the first time, UNODC began working with Palestinian youth to strengthen awareness and prevention of drug abuse, and on drug-related HIV/AIDS prevention.

### **Protection, gender and human rights**

33. The United Nations system intensified its efforts to ensure the protection of children, women and other vulnerable groups during the ongoing crisis. In November 2006, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights visited the region and met with a wide cross section of Israeli, Palestinian and civil society interlocutors. She visited Beit Hanoun, where 19 civilians were killed during an Israeli military operation on 8 November 2006, and highlighted the need for stronger accountability by all parties within international human rights and humanitarian legal frameworks, particularly for civilian protection. She also paid a visit to Sderot, the Israeli border town with Gaza, which was frequently attacked with rockets fired from Gaza.

34. Throughout the reporting period, OHCHR led the efforts of the country team to strengthen the human rights components of United Nations analysis and programming, notably by facilitating inter-agency meetings and supporting joint planning and monitoring. OHCHR worked with United Nations agencies, civil society groups and community leaders on human rights training and advocacy events, and facilitated meetings of local NGOs with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, during his visits to the region in June and December of 2006.

35. The International Labour Organization (ILO) launched a regional project to integrate gender and rights perspectives in the analysis of informal economies in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Arab States. In addition, several United Nations agencies, including UNIFEM, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP, UNRWA and WFP,

worked with local authorities and communities to strengthen the legal and social protection of children and women. These activities included support for enhanced legal defence services, training, awareness-raising, support for refugee and non-refugee women centres, and investment in local research and statistical surveys on domestic violence in the occupied Palestinian territory.

### **Safety and well-being of children**

36. The rights of Palestinian children to education, health, nutrition and play continued to be challenged. Data from the Palestinian Family Health Survey 2006 reveal that 10 out of 100 children under the age of five suffer from stunting. The proportion is higher in Gaza, at 13.2 per cent (almost 30 per cent of children in northern Gaza), compared to 7.9 per cent in the West Bank. The prevalence of violence in homes, schools and neighbourhoods remained an issue of particular concern. Restrictions on movement also continued to make access to health facilities, schools and extra-curricular activities difficult. School enrolment data revealed a 2-per-cent decline in the total enrolment rate during the 2005/06 scholastic year. Some 4.2 per cent of children ages 5 to 14 were working in 2006.

37. As noted previously, 146 Palestinian children were killed during the reporting period, far more than the toll for the previous reporting period, and many more injured by live fire, heavy artillery, tank shells, shrapnel and missiles. As noted above, over 23,000 refugee children and youth in the occupied Palestinian territory received psychological counselling and support through UNRWA, and UNDP-supported programmes aimed at increasing the resilience of children and youth who suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder and other forms of trauma. UNICEF and its non-governmental partners ran 12 psychosocial emergency teams to address the conflict-related distress of children and their caregivers. In total, 60,000 children attended UNICEF debriefing sessions and 30,000 caregivers were trained.

38. In response to high levels of violence against children and women in homes, schools and communities, UNICEF and its governmental and non-governmental partners have implemented a comprehensive programme since 2004, including monitoring, law and policy development, awareness-raising, capacity-building and the setting up of response systems. UNICEF also supported the development of a draft juvenile justice law and a Palestinian child rights law. In addition, UNICEF provided support to the Ministry of Detainees Affairs in building a comprehensive database on Palestinian children held in Israeli detention. UNICEF and the Ministry of Planning also continued establishing a national child protection monitoring system.

### **Targeted social assistance**

39. Responsibility for providing targeted social assistance to non-refugees in the occupied Palestinian territory lies primarily with the Palestinian Ministry of Social Affairs Special Hardship Cases Programme. In 2006, however, the management and delivery capacity of the Ministry was considerably weakened. In this context, WFP supported the Ministry to ensure monthly food deliveries to a caseload of 382,269 recipients. At the same time, the World Bank began implementing a project aimed primarily at strengthening the institutional capacity, transparency and effectiveness of the Ministry programme. Beginning in the second half of 2006, the cash

component of the Special Hardship Cases Programme was supported primarily through the European Commission-led temporary international mechanism.

40. UNRWA continued to target food distributions and cash support to 32,000 disadvantaged refugees in the West Bank and 87,000 in Gaza on a quarterly basis, at a cost of \$14.6 million in 2006, supplemented by significant emergency distributions. UNRWA also worked to reintegrate persons with disabilities into their communities, subsidized the costs of prosthetic devices, and supported home-based rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities.

## **B. United Nations system support to Palestinian institutions**

41. As noted, the reporting period saw severe strains placed upon Palestinian public institutions. These resulted in a fiscal crisis, recurring labour unrest and an overall weakening of public service delivery capacity, precisely at a time when the intensification of conflicts on the ground caused a rapid growth in social and economic needs, particularly in Gaza. Donor contact policies, moreover, had an important impact on the United Nations efforts to continue normal capacity-building support. While some capacity support was maintained in specific areas, this combination of factors caused a partial shift towards short-term emergency support for public health, education, and municipal and social services. Together UNDP, WHO, UNICEF and UNRWA intensified their efforts to procure fuel, transport, equipment and stocks essential for the operation of clinics, schools and solid waste removal and water treatment. In an effort to offset the impact of the fiscal crisis, UNRWA expanded its food basket coverage to include 23,000 families of Palestinian Authority employees no longer receiving their full wages. Sixty-five per cent of WFP programmes were implemented through Palestinian ministries and municipalities.

42. A key area of emergency support was in health service delivery. Working together, WHO, UNFPA and UNICEF supported the Ministry of Health to finalize its essential drugs list and to develop an essential drugs information mechanism. They assisted the Ministry to determine needs and inventories, and to liaise with donors on financing essential drugs procurement. UNDP assisted the Ministry in upgrading its information technology capacity with new software and equipment and to establish new standard operating procedures. In education, UNICEF adopted a “dual-use” supply strategy of directing essential school supplies to both emergency and non-emergency areas of the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

43. Another important area of United Nations support to a weakened administration was in the area of central aid management and sector coordination. Several United Nations agencies, including FAO, WHO, UNESCO and WFP, served as lead technical advisers to sector working groups, crucially bridging the gap between external donors and Ministries in an environment of restricted international contact policies. UNDP supported the Ministry of Planning to upgrade its aid tracking database. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) provided support to the Ministry of Finance to bridge the central budget to the medium-term development plan. The Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process provided the Ministry of Planning with strategic and operational planning support in the area of aid management.

### **Capacity-building**

44. At the same time that United Nations agencies acted to respond quickly to immediate institutional needs, several longer-term capacity-building programmes were maintained. UNDP deployed 24 expatriate Palestinian experts of the Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals programme and 73 United Nations Volunteers to strengthen Palestinian capacity across a broad range of institutions and, at the local level, supported civil society dialogue with municipal officials, local councillors and offices of the Ministry of Local Government.

45. UNCTAD continued its efforts to assist in modernizing Palestinian customs systems at the Rafah border crossing, while the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) provided training for border security at the Karni commercial crossing point between Israel and the Gaza Strip, and assisted in a major infrastructure project to improve security and efficiency at the crossing within the context of the Agreement on Movement and Access. WFP trained 60 staff from the Ministries of Social Affairs and Agriculture in food security, logistics, programme management, monitoring and beneficiary targeting. FAO continued to provide technical advice and training to the Ministry of Agriculture and other partners in the areas of agriculture and food security. In the area of culture, UNESCO provided specialized site management training for officials of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities and, using GIS mapping systems, assisted local authorities to develop an inventory of cultural heritage sites, features and tourist routes across the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

46. Finally, the United Nations continued to support the rule of law sector with technical and infrastructure assistance. UNIFEM provided human rights training for 10 female local councillors and 30 female police officers. UNDP completed the construction of the Khan Younis courthouse, with plans to begin similar work in Jenin, and initiated a project to automate the operations of the Supreme Judicial Council. UNDP also assisted in the construction of presidential premises in Ramallah.

### **C. Private sector development**

47. In February 2007, the World Bank conducted an investment climate assessment that confirmed that shrinking market access and lack of free movement in the occupied Palestinian territory posed the main constraints to growth for Palestinian enterprises during the reporting period. The study found that private sector recovery would be directly contingent on (a) restoring movement and access; (b) developing private enterprise capabilities; and (c) improving the investment climate. In this context, the Bank undertook a major feasibility study on the export of commercial goods via the Rafah border crossing with Egypt.

48. In 2006, UNCTAD worked directly with the private sector to establish the Palestinian Shippers' Council in order to facilitate trade and reduce import/export transaction costs. Together with ILO, UNCTAD provided training to build entrepreneurial capacity for 123 small and medium business leaders, including 16 women. ILO also continued to provide technical support to Palestinian trade unions and to the Federation of Palestinian Chambers of Commerce and Industry. Finally, as a measure to stimulate the private economy, WFP purchased \$16 million of food

commodities (wheat, oil, salt) from local suppliers, including 1,600 small-scale olive farmers of the West Bank.

#### **D. United Nations system emergency assistance**

49. The reporting period witnessed an intensification of what might be called an ongoing emergency in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, generated by a combination of closures, conflict, fiscal crisis and institutional degradation. In addition, the reporting period was punctuated by a number of specific emergency developments in the Gaza Strip that required rapid, coordinated responses by the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the NGO community. Three events stand out. On 28 June 2006, the Gaza central power plant was severely damaged by an Israeli air strike, immediately depleting some 60 per cent of the local power supply. In response, the United Nations system delivered a total of 650,000 litres of fuel for Gaza Strip municipalities and refugee camps to operate essential public services, including the provision of drinking water and the removal of solid waste. The plant's service was restored to pre-June levels with technical and financial support from Egypt and Sweden.

50. On 8 November 2006, the municipality of Beit Hanoun came under Israeli artillery attack after the firing of rockets by Palestinian militants. Some 19 Palestinians were killed and 52 injured when shelling destroyed a residential building. In response, United Nations humanitarian agencies successfully negotiated access to the conflict zone, and provided emergency water, food and medical access in support of those among the 50,000 residents that were most directly affected. On 27 March 2007, a breach in Gaza's main sewage treatment plant in Beit Lahia caused severe flooding in surrounding communities, killing 5 people and affecting some 700 families. The United Nations was the first to appear on site to support the evacuation of residents, to clean the area, and to coordinate with ICRC, NGOs and the Palestinian Civil Defence Service the provision of tents, water and food supplies to evacuees.

#### **Emergency food assistance, cash support and job creation**

51. Beyond these specific events, the United Nations remained at the forefront of overall humanitarian assistance provision during the reporting period. Restricted donor contact policies, reflected in a donor preference to "by-pass" the Palestinian Authority Government in the transfer of aid, resulted in the growth of food and cash assistance programmes in particular. Under the United Nations Consolidated Appeal for 2006, over \$274 million was received by the United Nations and NGOs, which directly targeted the Palestinian population. That represented 70 per cent of the original request.

52. UNRWA and WFP were the largest humanitarian providers during the reporting period. UNRWA raised \$145 million for emergency programmes, including food distributions to support some 70 per cent of the total registered refugee population. Given the depth of the crisis, UNRWA increased its emergency food caseload in mid-2006. Three million work days were created for 53,000 unemployed refugees, for periods of 1 to 12 months, at an average wage subsidy of \$14 dollars per day, and benefiting 400,000 refugees overall. WFP delivered 83,000 metric tons of food assistance to over 640,000 non-refugee recipients, at a cost of

\$44 million. WFP food-for-work programmes covered an additional 30,000 people during the reporting period. WFP also provided food supplements to municipal workers and fishermen in the Gaza Strip, benefiting some 8,000 family dependants.

53. UNDP implemented emergency job creation programmes with a longer-term developmental impact, including rehousing, road repair, agricultural rehabilitation, and solid waste management in Gaza. Some 180,000 work days were created with an investment of about \$12 million. An additional 100,000 work days were created in the West Bank through small-scale infrastructure projects, valued at some \$14 million received through the United Nations Consolidated Appeal. UNIFEM piloted a food security initiative in rural areas of the Gaza Strip, benefiting 65 women, and promoted the use of women centres for determining the beneficiaries of food-for-work and food-for-training initiatives. Together, FAO and WFP conducted a comprehensive food security and vulnerability analysis, which provided a new food security baseline for the occupied Palestinian territory, and the basis for a new food security monitoring system.

#### **Emergency health support**

54. The United Nations focused its efforts on ensuring the continuity of health service provision as the economic and institutional crisis deepened. WHO mobilized over \$13 million to support the provision of essential drugs and supplies to primary health-care services across the occupied Palestinian territory. UNRWA opened its clinic and hospital services to non-refugee users, and operated five mobile clinics to assist isolated communities in the West Bank, including those affected by the barrier, treating more than 11,000 patients each month. UNICEF worked to ensure that basic supplies were procured or replenished. Working together, WHO, UNICEF and UNFPA established a computerized system within the Ministry of Health to strengthen and modernize its management of drug supplies. UNICEF provided emergency drinking water and improved water and sanitation facilities to 33 clinics and 3 hospitals in the Gaza Strip.

55. Owing to increased stress and trauma experienced by the civilian population, United Nations agencies redoubled their emergency efforts in psychosocial care. During the reporting period, UNRWA's 310 counsellors conducted some 14,000 group sessions with over 237,000 participants, and 10,000 people received individual counselling. Likewise, UNICEF deployed 12 psychosocial teams across the West Bank and Gaza Strip to counsel over 40,000 children and supported secure recreational activities for over 35,000 more. UNIFEM provided counselling services to 2,000 women and medical staff in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

#### **Emergency education support**

56. As with health, education services also came under severe stress during the reporting period. Primary and secondary schools were affected by teachers' strikes in the West Bank from the opening of the school year, and inadequate financing resulted in shortages of essential school supplies. With international support, however, lost ground was regained towards the end of 2006. Most schools offered catch-up sessions to avert a repeat of the academic year by affected students.

57. UNRWA created 1,500 new temporary teaching positions under its job creation programme to mitigate declining education standards. In addition, UNICEF provided emergency water supplies to all 343 public primary and secondary schools,

and improved water storage and distribution facilities for some 70 schools. Together with the Palestinian Red Crescent Society, UNICEF also provided mine-risk education to 43,668 children and 6,939 adults. WFP contributed to adult education among 13,400 of the poorest non-refugees through food-for-training activities, and initiated a pilot in-school feeding programme for 10,000 children in the West Bank.

#### **Emergency agricultural support**

58. Agriculture has traditionally played the role of employer of last resort in times of crisis. Together with the Ministry of Agriculture and other partners, FAO implemented a total of seven projects focusing on recovery of crop and animal production among the most needy farming families; capacity-building and support services for farmers; support for backyard gardening and cottage industry for women; and emergency assistance for preparedness and response to avian influenza outbreaks. FAO directly assisted 1,500 poor farming families, or about 10,000 beneficiaries.

#### **Emergency infrastructure support**

59. Primary infrastructure damage during the reporting period resulted from Israel's extended military operation in Gaza between July and September 2006. UNDP moved quickly to produce a rapid assessment of damages, copies of which were widely circulated, including at the Stockholm donor conference of 1 September 2006, and served as a common reference point for donor planning and subsequent responses. UNRWA rehabilitated 1,541 houses and shelters and, critically, repaired the Salah ed-Din Bridge on the main north-south route in the Gaza Strip. UNRWA opened new shelters and offered space and care at its schools for several thousand refugees fleeing from military operations over the summer. UNICEF focused on the water and sanitation sectors, restoring residential and municipal water networks and storage facilities covering 21,000 people in the West Bank and Gaza. In addition, WFP allocated 60 per cent of food-for-work activities to the emergency infrastructure repair of roads, municipal buildings, pavements and other public assets.

### **E. Coordination of United Nations assistance**

60. In May 2006, the Secretary-General appointed a Deputy Special Coordinator at the senior executive level to ensure better coordination within the system. Adapting from the Integrated Mission model, the Deputy was appointed also as Humanitarian Coordinator for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and mandated to serve as Resident Coordinator. The Deputy Special Coordinator-Humanitarian Coordinator/Resident Coordinator oversaw the preparation and launch of the 2007 Consolidated Appeal, and, with support from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, led efforts to raise funds, negotiate humanitarian access, and facilitate the implementation of programmes in the occupied Palestinian territory, and in Lebanon during the 2006 conflict. With the collaboration of UNDP, the Deputy Special Coordinator also renewed engagement between the United Nations Development Group Office and the United Nations country team locally.

61. Coordination was effectively carried out by United Nations sector leads in health, education, food security and human rights. Following the visits of the Emergency Relief Coordinator and the High Commissioner for Human Rights, United Nations agencies formed a protection sector group, covering issues of

protection, the rule of law, and accountability, under the stewardship of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and OHCHR. Multi-sector coordination by UNDP, WHO, FAO, WFP and UNICEF proved especially effective in organizing the United Nations response and follow-up to the avian influenza epidemic in the first half of 2006.

62. Responding to increasing donor concerns about the humanitarian situation on the ground, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs coordinated the development of the monthly Humanitarian Monitor Report. The Monitor provided an exhaustive and comprehensive analysis of changing socio-economic patterns and public service delivery capacities, and received a very positive response from the donor community. By April 2007, the United Nations Consolidated Appeal, valued at over \$450 million, received funds amounting to 18 per cent of stated requirements.

#### **Humanitarian access**

63. With a hardening of Israel's security posture during a period of intensified violence, passage of United Nations staff between the Gaza Strip and Israel, and between the West Bank and Jerusalem, was subject to unprecedented restrictions, particularly for Palestinian staff. To address the issue, senior United Nations officials, with support from key donor countries, engaged in sustained consultations and démarches with the Government of Israel, at local and Headquarters levels. The Secretary-General highlighted problems of United Nations humanitarian access with the Prime Minister and key Israeli Cabinet members during his visit to the region in March 2007. At the time of writing, the issue awaited resolution.

#### **United Nations media and public information activities**

64. The main vehicle for coordinating the United Nations media and public information activities during the reporting period was the inter-agency Advocacy and Public Information Committee. Serving under the United Nations country team structure, the Committee coordinated two major inter-agency press statements on the closure and military operation in the Gaza Strip, and organized a major media event to coincide with the Palestinian olive harvest. In addition, specialized United Nations agencies led advocacy and media efforts in their specific areas of focus, including public health, the protection of civilians and children, cultural heritage and press freedom.

## **IV. Donor response to the crisis**

### **A. Emergency budget and fiscal support**

65. As noted, the majority of donors withdrew direct budget support to the Palestinian Authority in March 2006, following the formation of a Hamas-led Government. The withdrawal of budgetary support, combined with the decision of the Government of Israel to withhold clearance revenues collected on behalf of the Palestinian Authority, meant that by May 2006 Palestinian Authority monthly revenues had fallen to around a third of 2005 levels. The temporary international mechanism delivered funds to pay social allowances, and meet the procurement and recurrent costs of key non-security social services. By April 2007, the mechanism had disbursed some \$330 million. Donors also relied increasingly on established



humanitarian channels, most notably the United Nations and NGOs, which together delivered over \$460 million directly to Palestinian recipients.

## **B. Support to Palestinian reform**

66. In the light of restrictive donor contact policies, much of the Palestinian reform agenda was put on hold. Security sector reform was complicated in a context where the main international interlocutor on security, the United States, was unable to engage with the Palestinian Authority Government. Support to security services reporting to the Office of the President, and to other aspects of the Office, however, continued.

67. Some of the most important reform gains of the past few years, notably in the field of public financial management, were considered lost during 2006. The Single Treasury Account and the national budget ceased to operate, as did legislative reform efforts. Donors nonetheless encouraged ongoing discussions about reform strategy, focusing on short- and medium-term objectives that could be supported if political conditions changed. With the formation of the Government of National Unity some began to re-engage, albeit variably, indicating the possibility of reviving the reform agenda.

## **C. Donor coordination**

68. Donor contact policies limited the effectiveness of existing coordination structures during 2006. These coordination structures had been designed in 2005 to integrate the Palestinian Authority into donor coordination and decision-making processes, in accordance with the 2005 Paris Principles. The United Nations, which was less constrained than many of the donors in its contact with Palestinian officials, played a critical role throughout the year in maintaining links between the donor coordination mechanism and the Palestinian Authority at both central and sector coordination levels. This helped to maintain the operation of core services of the Palestinian Authority, such as in public health and social welfare. Following the formation of the Government of National Unity, the United Nations began to work closely with key partners to re-energize donor coordination.

## **V. Looking ahead**

### **A. Political, economic and social challenges**

69. The formation of the Palestinian Government of National Unity transformed the political landscape for Palestinians, creating opportunities for greater, though still constrained, contact between the international community and the Palestinian Authority.

70. Conditions for most Palestinians nonetheless remained extremely difficult. While inter-Palestinian factional violence subsided in early 2007, the situation in Gaza remained tense. Bringing internal violence under control appeared as a major test of the new Government, as did effective actions to prevent militant attacks against Israeli targets. The economy remained severely depressed, and appeared set to remain under stress in the light of ongoing commercial closures.

71. The fiscal crisis of the Palestinian Authority, already critical by the end of 2005, risked threatening its very viability in the first half of 2007. Even with the resumption of customs and value-added tax transfers, a Palestinian budget deficit loomed at some \$80 million every month.

72. Ensuring the resumption of negotiations towards a permanent resolution of the conflict remained a major challenge for both parties. To allow sustained progress on the political track, the Palestinian Government would need to show progress in the reduction of violence against Israel. For its part, the Government of Israel must cease settlement construction and remove outposts. Both Israeli and Palestinian Governments also face domestic difficulties. The international community, including the regional countries, can contribute usefully, as illustrated by the re-energizing of the Quartet and the Arab Peace Initiative.

## **B. Unmet and emerging requirements**

### **Access**

73. While United Nations agencies continued to negotiate for unimpeded humanitarian access, the Palestinians experienced an increasingly restrictive closure regime that directly undermined their ability to engage in economic activity. The effects of these closures could not be reversed with increased humanitarian assistance. Development initiatives to improve the Palestinian economy were expected to have limited impact in an environment where intense access restrictions prevailed. The reporting period showed that despite substantially increased levels of aid, socio-economic indicators have worsened. Without normalization of movement of people and goods into and out of Gaza and East Jerusalem, and within the West Bank itself, poverty and unemployment were expected to rise and aid dependency to grow.

### **Youth and education**

74. For many years, Palestinian enrolment rates were applauded as among the best in the region. The sector came under considerable strain during the reporting period, raising concerns about the quality of education services. There was growing demographic pressure for more classrooms, and for accelerated teacher training. In isolated areas, such as the Jordan Valley, schools remained dilapidated, lacking basic water and sanitation facilities. Remedial education and more focus on girls' schooling was required, particularly in areas where closures were most severe.

### **Women**

75. In addition to externally imposed economic and movement restrictions, social pressures faced by women often further impeded their mobility and access to information, resources and services. Palestinian women tended to be an underutilized human resource in employment generation programmes, despite being under increasing pressure to contribute to household incomes. A community-based approach offered an opportunity to generate employment for women through locally based initiatives. In addition, more needed to be done to address the psychosocial health of women, not only as caregivers, but as individuals with particular needs and pressures.

## Health

76. Concerns grew that the Palestinian Authority financial crisis would seriously affect health sector performance over the longer term. Historically, about half of the Ministry of Health budget had been covered by international aid through both budgetary support and projects implemented through the Ministry. Continued funding restrictions of the kind witnessed during the reporting period created a real risk of deterioration in health service delivery and reform.

## VI. Conclusion

77. During the reporting period, the crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory deepened and continued to claim lives. The combination of continued conflict, closures, fiscal crisis and withholding of Palestinian revenues by the Government of Israel had immediate effects: incomes dropped, and poverty and food insecurity worsened. Gaza saw a virtual collapse in law and order. Yet the situation could have been worse, were it not for the rapid interventions by the United Nations system, NGOs and the temporary international mechanism, which together disbursed upwards of \$800 million in emergency food, cash and budget support.

78. As it moved into its second quarter, the year 2007 witnessed some modest improvements in overall policy setting. Dialogue between Israel and the Palestinians resumed, and enabled a substantial transfer of customs and tax revenues in early January, as well as improvements of commercial flows at the Karni crossing. Most significantly, the new Palestinian Government of National Unity was formed, leading to a selective re-engagement by some donors. The appointment of Salaam Fayad to the post of Finance Minister appeared to offer new options for international re-engagement. Critically, the Palestinian Government of National Unity had an immediate effect of decreasing internal factional fighting, though the level of violence remained critical in the Gaza Strip, as exemplified by the abduction of a British journalist, who should be released immediately and safely. For further progress to be possible, law and order should be fully restored in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, facts on the ground that prejudice final status issues should be avoided, and access and movement for the Palestinians should be facilitated. I reiterate my calls on the Government of Israel to ease restrictions and resume payment, through an appropriate mechanism, of the Palestinian tax revenues it collects, and on the Palestinian Authority to respect fully the three principles of the Quartet. Moreover, the Israeli soldier who was captured in June 2006 must be released.

79. How resilient these encouraging but modest steps will prove to be in the coming period, and whether they will translate into concrete, lasting improvements for the majority of Palestinians, will depend on the willingness of the parties to meet their respective commitments and of the international community to encourage them along this path. The United Nations will continue to monitor events closely, in order to respond to urgent needs, and to capitalize on opportunities for development as they arise. In doing this, it will seek to realize its broader aim, which is also that of the Quartet and the entire international community: a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East, based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 1397 (2002) and 1515 (2003), and the establishment of a sovereign, democratic, viable and contiguous Palestinian state, living side by side in peace with a secure Israel.



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**Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance**

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Item 9 of the provisional agenda\*\*

**Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations**

## Assistance to the Palestinian people

### Report of the Secretary-General

#### *Summary*

During the period under review, the Palestinian economy continued to suffer hardship and decline. In the aftermath of Hamas's takeover of the Gaza Strip and the formation of a new Palestinian Authority Government under Prime Minister Salam Fayyad, the West Bank witnessed some modest economic recovery. The Gaza Strip, however, continued to experience drastic economic decline and private sector collapse due to a near-complete closure. There was significant progress in reform and pledges from international donors in the amount of \$7.7 billion for a three-year period to enable the implementation of the new Palestinian Reform and Development Plan.

These developments reflected the de facto political split between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip from June 2007 onwards. While bilateral political negotiations resumed between the Government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority in the context of the November 2007 Annapolis conference and the parties committed to reaching an agreement by the end of 2008, the situation in and around Gaza was characterized by near-daily rocket fire against Israeli targets and Israeli aerial attacks and military incursions.

The present report describes efforts made by United Nations agencies and programmes, in cooperation with Palestinian Authority and donor counterparts, to support the Palestinian civilian population and institutions.

\* A/63/50.

\*\* E/2008/100.



## I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 62/93, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its sixty-third session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution, containing an assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people and of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them. The reporting period was from May 2007 to April 2008.

2. Information on the living and socio-economic conditions of the Palestinian people is provided in reports prepared by United Nations agencies, in particular (a) the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan (A/62/75-E/2007/13); (b) the annual report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA);<sup>1</sup> and (c) the Humanitarian Monitor reports of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

3. Throughout the year, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority continued its efforts to support the peace process and to ensure effective coordination between the Palestinian Authority, the United Nations, the international community and the Government of Israel, as well as to document the economic and social conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory.

4. The present report provides an overview of the work of United Nations agencies, in cooperation with Palestinian and donor counterparts, to assist the Palestinian people and institutions, as described in General Assembly resolution 62/93. Also included is a summary of key political developments and challenges relevant to the reporting period as the international community responds to the crisis and works to alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people and to support progress in the political process between the parties.

## II. Overview of the current situation

### A. Political context

5. Factional rivalry and clashes between Hamas and Fatah, which had begun in 2006, continued during 2007. Following a series of declared truces between the factions, President Abbas and Prime Minister Haniyeh met in Mecca in February 2007 under Saudi Arabian auspices to agree to the formation of a national unity Government. However, renewed fighting erupted, and in June 2007 Hamas forces took control of the Gaza Strip. President Abbas appointed a new Palestinian Authority Government under Prime Minister Salam Fayyad. The new Government committed itself to the basic principles of the peace process as outlined by the

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<sup>1</sup> *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/62/13).*

Quartet in January 2006. In response, the international community resumed direct contact and donor assistance to the Palestinian Authority. The Government of Israel also resumed transfers of tax revenues to the Palestinian Authority, and in July 2007 the Quartet appointed Tony Blair as its representative to support Palestinian Authority institution-building and economic revitalization.

6. Bilateral Palestinian-Israeli talks under the auspices of the United States of America resumed after the formation of the new Government. At the November 2007 conference in Annapolis, attended by over 40 States, the parties made a joint declaration, pledging to restart negotiations on core issues with the aim of reaching a peace treaty by the end of 2008, with implementation subject to achievement of the benchmarks of the first phase of the road map. The joint declaration also included a commitment to immediate implementation of road map obligations and to United States monitoring of performance.

7. For its part, Prime Minister Fayyad's Government began the development of the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan 2008-2010, outlining a vision for a future State. A summary of that Plan, prioritizing the strengthening of public institutions, local government and the justice system, was presented at a donors' conference in December 2007 in Paris. In keeping with progress in the area of fiscal and security sector reform, towards the end of 2007 Palestinian Authority security forces started deploying in West Bank towns to reassert Palestinian Authority control.

8. At the same time, throughout the course of the year, rocket attacks emanating from Gaza against Israeli targets and Israeli military incursions into Palestinian territory continued. Restrictions on movement and access in the West Bank remained tight, and settlement activity and construction of the barrier continued, despite a number of positive developments and agreements between the two parties on specific measures to ease the situation on the ground.

9. In January 2008 Palestinian militants breached the border with Egypt, and hundreds of thousands of Palestinians streamed into Egypt before the border was resealed 11 days later. A suicide bombing in early February in the Israeli town of Dimona killed one Israeli civilian, and on 6 March a shooting attack on a yeshiva in Jerusalem killed eight Israelis. At the end of February intensified rocket fire included the targeting by Palestinian militants of the Israeli port city of Ashkelon with Grad missiles, and Israeli military action left more than 100 Palestinians dead before violence abated slightly in March and April 2008.

## **B. Humanitarian and socio-economic context**

### **Economic and fiscal developments**

10. Following the significant economic contraction and severe fiscal crisis of 2006, Palestinian gross domestic product (GDP) per capita in 2006 (\$1,130) had reached a level that was 40 per cent lower than in 1999. Over two thirds of the economy, once driven by private sector investment and production, continued to be sustained by government subsidies and donor aid.<sup>2</sup> The main factors behind this

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<sup>2</sup> "Investing in Palestinian economic reform and development", report for Paris pledging conference, World Bank, December 2007.

economic downturn were political uncertainties, insecurity and, in particular, trade, mobility and employment restrictions, which have intensified markedly in recent years. The economy was also affected by a 15-month interruption of regular salary payments to some 150,000 employees of the Palestinian Authority, the largest employer in Gaza and the West Bank, during 2006 and the first half of 2007.

11. The appointment of a new Government under Prime Minister Fayyad in June 2007, and the subsequent resumption of full salary payments, led to a modest rebound in the second half of the year and strengthened private sector confidence. Revenue grew with increased economic activity in the West Bank, and expenditure control was tightened with the re-establishment of the single treasury account. However, despite improvements in the West Bank, drastic private sector decline in Gaza cancelled out any real GDP growth overall in 2007.

12. At the international donors' conference in Paris in December 2007, donors pledged \$7.7 billion in financial support for the Palestinian Authority over three years. By April 2008, half of the pledges targeting recurrent expenditures had been disbursed, in addition to \$500 million towards budgetary support. The Palestinian Authority reduced public sector employment and focused its efforts on moving towards further reform and fiscal stability. The Authority also made progress in establishing a series of public financial management reforms, including the formation of internal audit functions, a draft procurement law and timely publication of public financial information.

#### **Humanitarian and socio-economic developments**

13. Severe levels of violence continued throughout the reporting period. In all, 998 Palestinians (100 children) were killed and a further 4,150 injured (392 children). Close to 40 per cent of these deaths were the result of internal Palestinian factional fighting. Twenty-three Israelis (4 children) were killed by Palestinians and 347 injured (9 children). Militants in Gaza launched over 1,900 rockets and mortar shells on communities in Israel.

14. Despite large inflows of aid in both 2006 and 2007, socio-economic distress continued to permeate Palestinian society. At least 56 per cent of the population in the occupied Palestinian territory was living below the official poverty line during the reporting period. Thirty-four per cent were in a state of food insecurity, and unemployment levels had increased to nearly 23 per cent, double the rate prior to September 2000.<sup>3</sup> Young people were hit hardest by unemployment, with 36 per cent of 20- to 24-year-olds out of work. The economic crisis also affected the refugee population, many members of which have small amounts of accumulated savings, tend to have larger families, and lack access to land-based forms of subsistence.

15. A number of health indicators in the occupied Palestinian territory showed signs of deterioration. Ten per cent of children under the age of five suffered from stunting (chronic malnutrition), an increase over previous years.<sup>4</sup> The prevalence of chronic disease has increased by over 30 per cent since 2005, and recent figures from the Palestinian Authority's Ministry of Health indicate that 35 per cent of pregnant women and 65 per cent of children between the ages of 9 and 12 months

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<sup>3</sup> Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics labour force studies, 2008.

<sup>4</sup> 1996: 7.7 per cent; 2000: 8 per cent; 2004: 9.9 per cent.

attending Palestinian health centre facilities are anaemic.<sup>5</sup> United Nations studies in the past year point to a significant deterioration in students' academic achievements, particularly in Gaza, where 80 per cent failure rates in mathematics and 40 per cent failure rates in Arabic have been noted and dropout rates have increased for both male and female students.

### **Gaza**

16. The situation in the Gaza Strip continued to deteriorate throughout the reporting period. Under near total closure, living conditions and livelihoods plummeted to new depths. Some 95 per cent of Gaza's industrial operations were suspended, transforming it into a consumer economy driven by public sector salaries and humanitarian assistance. The percentage of Gaza's population living in deep poverty<sup>6</sup> has been steadily increasing, rising from 21.6 per cent in 1998 to nearly 35 per cent in 2006. With continued economic fallout in 2007 and even stricter closures, the current rate is expected to be much higher. Thirty-three per cent of Gazans are unemployed and 80 per cent rely on United Nations food and other direct assistance.

17. In October 2007 the Government of Israel began decreasing the amount of fuel permitted into Gaza, including amounts overseen by the temporary international mechanism to ensure supplies to the power plant, health facilities and water and sanitation installations. Strikes conducted by fuel distributors inside the strip, in protest of these restrictions, further exacerbated the situation, as did an attack on the Nahal Oz fuel crossing by Palestinian militants in April 2008, which killed two Israeli contractors and led to a suspension of supplies.

18. The efficiency of water networks deteriorated from 70 per cent in June 2007 to 55 per cent in February 2008, owing to a lack of spare parts and materials. From January 2008 onwards, 40 million litres of raw and partially treated sewage per day were emptied into the sea. Increased inefficiency of public health-care administration and management, intermittent strikes and a lack of specialized equipment and maintenance strained health-care delivery, forcing twice the number of patients to seek permits for treatment outside Gaza as did prior to June 2007.

### **Movement and access**

19. Targets relating to the 2005 agreement on movement and access were effectively abandoned following the June 2007 takeover of the Gaza Strip by Hamas. Since then, the Rafah crossing has been closed, with few exceptions. In January 2008, Gaza militants forcibly breached the border and Palestinians crossed between Gaza and Egypt for 11 days. In March 2008, some 300 medical patients were allowed into Egypt.

20. Commercial crossings into Israel (Karni, Kerem Shalom and Sufa) were open for importing international humanitarian and limited commercial goods. However, by March 2008 restrictions had resulted in a 77 per cent decline in the monthly average of imported truckloads from pre-June 2007 rates. All exports out of Gaza

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<sup>5</sup> Palestinian Family Health Survey, 2006, and Ministry of Health nutrition surveillance system, 2006.

<sup>6</sup> Defined by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics as a budget of 1,837 new Israeli shekels for a family of six for food, clothing and housing only.



were blocked, with the exception of 78 truckloads largely filled with flowers and strawberries, grown with the support of donor assistance and after intervention by the international community, in late 2007. The Erez crossing remained closed for Palestinians during the same period, except for medical cases and a small number of merchants.

21. There was no progress on construction of a seaport or airport, or on the establishment of a link between the West Bank and Gaza, as envisaged in the agreement on movement and access. In April 2008 the Government of Israel announced its intention to remove 61 roadblocks in the West Bank, a trust-building gesture welcomed by the international community. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs subsequently determined that the removal of five of the obstacles would have a significant impact on movement in the West Bank. The number of remaining obstacles to movement in the West Bank currently stands at 612. Movement into urban East Jerusalem through the barrier became more restricted with the implementation of new permit and identification procedures. In the past three years the number of crossing points through the barrier has steadily decreased. By April 2008 two thirds of these crossings were closed to West Bank residents. The difficulty of obtaining a permit to enter Jerusalem has resulted in a decrease of as much as 50 per cent in the number of patients visiting the six specialist hospitals in East Jerusalem over the past several years.<sup>7</sup>

#### **Barrier**

22. Barrier construction continued despite the advisory opinion rendered by the International Court of Justice in July 2004 and General Assembly resolution ES-10/17 of 15 December 2006. As of April 2008, approximately 57 per cent (723 km) of the planned route of the barrier was completed. Nearly 250,000 Palestinians will reside in villages and towns totally or partially surrounded by the barrier if it is completed, and some 25 per cent of East Jerusalem's Palestinians will be cut off from the city.

23. By its resolution ES-10/17, the General Assembly also established the United Nations Register of Damage Caused by the Construction of the Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Progress was made when the Executive Director of the Register of Damage went on an initial mission to the area in April 2008, meeting with Palestinian Authority and United Nations officials, as well as other key actors.

### **III. United Nations response**

24. United Nations agencies and programmes continued to discharge their responsibilities to the best of their abilities, but had to adjust to a situation in which priorities and activities with respect to the Gaza Strip and the West Bank diverged significantly under the impact of the de facto political split between the two constituent parts of the occupied Palestinian territory. With regard to Gaza, United Nations agencies and programmes continued to face severe restrictions and obstacles that made the delivery of United Nations assistance more urgent, but also more difficult. With the appointment of a new Palestinian Authority Government in

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<sup>7</sup> "East Jerusalem: the humanitarian impact of the West Bank barrier", Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, July 2007.

June 2007 and work on the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan, United Nations agencies and programmes have sought to place particular emphasis on restoring their close coordination with Palestinian Authority counterparts in the West Bank and to support the priorities and needs identified by the Palestinian Authority's Plan.

## **A. Human and social development**

25. Emergency and life-sustaining interventions continued to take priority over development cooperation activities in the reporting period, especially in the Gaza Strip. In the West Bank, United Nations agencies and programmes were increasingly able to refocus some of their attention on longer-term economic, infrastructure, capacity-building and service delivery interventions, and the United Nations sought to increasingly align its programmes with the reform agenda set out by the Palestinian Authority in the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan.

### **Education**

26. UNRWA, with a \$146 million education programme, continued to ensure free education for over 250,000 pupils in 306 elementary and preparatory schools in the West Bank and Gaza. Through its network of vocational, technical and teacher-training centres, UNRWA also provided skills and pre-service teacher training to 3,400 trainees in 2007. In Gaza, a recovery plan was introduced to provide focused and intensive support to 50,000 pupils in UNRWA schools.

27. Through its \$7 million Support to the Palestinian Education Programme, implemented in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People worked to improve the quality of and access to education in the occupied Palestinian territory. Five new schools were constructed in the West Bank and Gaza and 10 buildings rehabilitated, creating 1,880 new seats for students. The Programme also provided equipment, computer labs, libraries and other teaching aids to 190 schools, benefiting over 5,000 students.

28. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) provided technical assistance for the Ministry of Education and Higher Education sectoral policy and planning efforts, supporting the preparation of the five-year Education Development Strategic Plan (2008-2012) and a National Teacher Education Strategy, both of which reflected educational priorities identified in the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), with education and adolescent programme expenditures of \$6.1 million, provided technical and financial assistance to build capacity, support the establishment of subnational teacher-training centres in disadvantaged districts and provide equipment for the National Institute for Teacher Education in Ramallah and Gaza. A report on key strategies for scaling up girls' education was prepared in collaboration with UNESCO as a follow-up to the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative. The development of a student card system was also provided to strengthen the education management information system.

29. UNICEF further supported informal learning and recreational activities for adolescents to improve literacy and vocational skills; implemented short-term training for teachers and school administrators; organized thematic club activities

designed to alleviate trauma; provided educational supplies to schools in Gaza; and supported both the Ministry of Education and Higher Education and the Palestinian Red Crescent Society in conducting mine-awareness training in high-risk areas. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, and the Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizens' Rights cooperated to facilitate a short-story competition on the implications of poverty and human rights for elementary and secondary-school students. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), together with the Ministry, developed a national referral system for youth-friendly services. UNFPA also continued to build the capacity of teachers, counsellors, health staff and school health committee coordinators for in-school information and counselling activities.

### **Health**

30. UNRWA continued to operate 56 health facilities providing primary health care at a cost of \$40 million. With an 18 per cent increase in demand from the 2006 level, UNRWA medical staff carried out nearly 6 million consultations in these facilities. The agency also supported environmental health projects in Gaza through the delivery of diesel to providers of basic utility services such as water, sewage pumping and solid waste collection and disposal.

31. In the preparation of the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan and of the National Strategic Health Plan 2008-2010, the World Health Organization (WHO) provided technical expertise to the Ministry of Health, training staff in the areas of child nutrition, safe water, hygiene, outbreaks and epidemics, and control and prevention of non-communicable diseases. WHO supported the Ministry as technical adviser of the Health Sector Working Group, focusing on strengthening the Palestinian Health Information Centre and ensuring quality collection, analysis and dissemination of data. WHO also supported the mental health sector through training, establishing family groups in both the West Bank and Gaza, and strengthening the Ministry's referral and information systems.

32. WHO further supported the Ministry of Health in procuring and delivering essential pharmaceutical supplies worth \$18 million, substantially improving drug availability in the West Bank and Gaza. Drug items lacking at the central level in Gaza dropped by 43 per cent between May 2007 and September 2007. The amount of essential drugs at less than one month of stock for the occupied Palestinian territory as a whole dropped by nearly half during the same period. WHO also continued its efforts in promoting health as a human right and as a bridge for peace through advocacy and dialogue, facilitating a symposium on Gaza involving Israeli and Palestinian stakeholders, which was followed by an Israeli-Palestinian joint forum on access to health in Gaza.

33. A number of United Nations agencies and programmes dedicated some of their resources to issues related to HIV/AIDS. The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) focused on women's and girls' vulnerability to sexually transmitted diseases, conducting intensive awareness training on issues of gender and HIV/AIDS. UNFPA worked on strengthening the National AIDS Committee to spearhead and guide the response to HIV/AIDS in the West Bank and Gaza; it also focused on national capacity-building in the areas of reproductive health, population, gender and psychosocial care. UNFPA sought to make reproductive

health services accessible to all through the provision of emergency obstetric care and outreach services to isolated communities.

34. UNICEF concentrated its efforts on reducing child mortality, helping the occupied Palestinian territory achieve the fourth Millennium Development Goal, with a sustained under-five mortality rate of 28.3 per 1,000 live births, well below the Middle East regional average of 56 per 1,000. The provision of primary health care and childhood drugs, along with essential obstetric and neonatal equipment, to 17 primary health facilities and referral hospitals contributed to a 30 per cent reduction in newborn infections and birth asphyxia between 2006 and 2007. The cold-chain system was strengthened and capacity expanded with the provision of a mobile cold-chain vehicle, a 10,000 cubic-metre fuel storage tank and a 40 cubic-metre walk-in cold room. An immunization coverage rate of more than 95 per cent for all antigens was sustained for the fifth year running, setting the occupied Palestinian territory on track for eradicating poliomyelitis, as well as eliminating measles and tetanus.

#### **Targeted social assistance**

35. Through its Special Hardship Case Programme, UNRWA distributed food and cash subsidies on a quarterly basis. During the reporting period, nearly 500,000 social safety-net packages were distributed to over 10,000 families in the West Bank and over 19,000 in Gaza. UNRWA focused on mainstreaming people with disabilities into the various programmes, in addition to rendering rehabilitation sessions for disabled people and providing mobility and prosthetic devices.

#### **Human rights, women, children and youth**

36. Human rights and the rights of women, children and the young continued to suffer many challenges. During the reporting period, OHCHR continued implementing its programme of mainstreaming human rights within the United Nations country team. In July, a familiarization session on the rights of persons with disabilities was organized in partnership with UNICEF. OHCHR also implemented six familiarization training and two train-the-trainer courses on United Nations mechanisms to protect human rights for an audience of human rights defenders, legal professional and women's rights activists.

37. UNESCO promoted freedom of expression, in particular professional and ethical standards in journalism, as well as institutional capacity development for Palestinian public and private media organizations so as to strengthen the independence and pluralism of the media. Given the context of increased violence and tension in Gaza, a safety training programme for media professionals was also conducted.

38. UNIFEM focused its activities on documenting and advocating against abuses of Palestinian women's human rights; providing forums for discussion; supporting toll-free help lines operated by qualified counsellors; and promoting legal literacy and aid for rural women. The agency supported a programme of legal aid and health assistance to Palestinian female prisoners in Israeli detention. UNIFEM focused on the mobilization of 18 community-based women's centres in rural areas, directly benefiting 25,000 women. UNFPA, together with its national partners, complemented these activities by working towards creating community-based initiatives that enable women to protect themselves from gender-based violence. Its

activities in that regard included a national conference on combating gender-based violence in cooperation with the Ministry of Women's Affairs. UNFPA arranged training and psychosocial services provided at mobile health clinics, community sessions on gender-based violence, campaigns and the distribution of information materials and female hygiene kits.

39. UNRWA supported a number of community-based organizations in activities promoting the role of women in development, including through skills training, awareness-raising lectures and the provision of legal aid. UNRWA also began implementation of its Equality in Action initiative, designed to improve the capacity of Palestinian women and girls to exercise freedom of choice and take advantage of opportunities for personal and professional development, and to address inequality at all levels of social, economic, and political life. UNRWA, UNIFEM, UNFPA and OHCHR marked the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women as part of the global campaign, in cooperation with civil society organizations and the Ministry of Women's Affairs.

40. A gender adviser was deployed through the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Gender Capacity Standby Project to make recommendations to humanitarian agencies on improving humanitarian assistance to Palestinian women. This mission was supported by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, with assistance from UNFPA and UNIFEM. The World Food Programme (WFP) targeted food delivery to women wherever possible and also provided human rights training within its food-for-training initiative in the Gaza Strip.

41. UNESCO, UNIFEM and UNFPA supported the Palestinian Women's Research and Documentation Centre, enabling research on the history and current status of women in Palestinian society. Training courses in gender-sensitive research, analysis and planning were organized for staff in relevant central and line ministries.

42. As children continued to be exposed to both conflict-related and domestic violence, UNICEF supported the Ministry of Social Affairs to establish three district-level child protection networks providing multidisciplinary support and management of cases of children subject to abuse. UNICEF also continued supporting five socio-legal defence centres for children and families that were victims of violence. The agency supported the Ministry of Education and Higher Education in the development of a non-violence policy and a protocol for the detection of abuse and referral of cases of schoolchildren to be adopted as a national system. UNICEF provided support to 14 psychosocial teams, reaching over 50,000 children and adolescents, and provided training to 35,000 caregivers. The agency supported 15 child-led campaigns to promote non-violence and to raise awareness on child protection as a priority issue at the district and national levels.

43. UNFPA continued to build the capacity of teachers, counsellors, health staff and health committee coordinators for in-school information and counselling activities. The agency worked with over 80 youth non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on strengthening and expanding a peer educators' network in the West Bank and Gaza. UNFPA also provided technical and financial support to governmental and non-governmental organizations for projects to strengthen psychosocial services to young people and generate economic opportunities for young university graduates in psychosocial counselling. In 2007 UNFPA formed and chaired a United Nations thematic group on youth to strengthen coordination among United Nations agencies

working with Palestinian youth and further worked on operationalizing the provisions of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).

44. UNRWA, in partnership with UNICEF and other local and international organizations, provided thousands of refugee children and youths with training, tutoring and skills-building activities. UNIFEM supported the Youth Rights Monitor project, funded through the United Nations Democracy Fund, aimed at institutionalizing the participation of Palestinian youth in national public policy dialogue, with a special focus on the rights of Palestinian youth.

#### **Millennium Development Goals**

45. United Nations engagement continued in support of the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in the occupied Palestinian territory. ESCWA worked with national statistical offices, including the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, to enhance their capacity to maintain a central repository of data for Millennium Development Goal reporting. ESCWA also provided training on the use of data and indicators relating to the Goals in order to improve evidence-based management and advocacy.

46. United Nations agencies collaborated closely with the Palestinian Authority to develop joint proposals under several thematic windows of the UNDP/Spain Millennium Development Goal Achievement Fund. As of April 2008, two of these proposals had been accepted. Under the culture and development window, UNESCO, UNIFEM, the UNDP Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People and the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) developed a programme supporting policies and an enabling environment for the promotion and protection of cultural heritage. Under the gender and women's empowerment window, UNIFEM, the UNDP Programme of Assistance, UNFPA, UNESCO, UNRWA and the International Labour Organization will be implementing a programme addressing gender-based violence and women's economic and political participation.

#### **Environment**

47. The majority of projects implemented by the UNDP Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People in the environment sector were water and wastewater infrastructure projects, worth over \$4 million. UNICEF, in partnership with government authorities, donors and NGOs, also worked to prevent outbreaks of disease by expanding access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation facilities at schools, hospitals and poorly served communities. As a result, access for vulnerable communities has increased by approximately 50 per cent, reaching an estimated population of more than 265,000 people in the West Bank and Gaza. There were no reported water-related disease outbreaks during the reporting period.

### **B. United Nations system support for Palestinian institutions**

48. Palestinian public institutions in the West Bank experienced a revitalization once the Government of Prime Minister Fayyad was appointed. Considerable emphasis was placed on continued institutional reform and capacity-building, which is the focus of the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan and of international donor engagement and support. During the reporting period the UNDP Programme

of Assistance to the Palestinian People worked to enhance the development of efficient and accountable institutions at the local, regional and national levels, addressing the priorities of the three branches of government, namely, the executive, the legislature and the judiciary. The Programme of Assistance also helped strengthen the relationship between the Government and civil society organizations, the private sector and the media. It supported the effort to strengthen governing institutions and central ministries, including the President's Office, the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Planning, the Ministry of Finance and the General Personnel Council. The Programme of Assistance also initiated cooperation with the Palestinian Authority towards establishing a capacity development facility, in line with the programme objectives of the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan. The Palestinian Authority has further requested the UNDP Programme of Assistance to support the elaboration of a national capacity development programme, which would include such a facility as a central supportive element.

49. ESCWA launched a capacity-building project aimed at enhancing the capacities of governmental and civil society institutions in planning, implementing and monitoring more effective and impact-based development projects. Programme activities fostered knowledge in social participatory development approaches and identified models to strengthen the public sector-civil society partnership in social policy processes. ESCWA also launched a project focusing on participatory human development in post-conflict countries, strengthening governmental-civic partnerships in conflict-afflicted ESCWA member countries, including the occupied Palestinian territory.

50. UNFPA and UNICEF provided technical and financial assistance and training to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics to conduct the second population, housing and establishment census. Support was provided for the development of databases for monitoring progress towards Millennium Development Goals. The Ministry of Planning also received support from UNICEF to review progress and update the National Plan of Action for Palestinian Children (2004-2010). OHCHR facilitated training and capacity-building initiatives with the Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizens' Rights, aimed at strengthening its independence and improving compliance with international human rights standards. FAO gave technical assistance to coordination mechanisms within the Palestinian Authority to improve humanitarian, recovery and development interventions. Through this support, a comprehensive Palestinian socio-economic and food security monitoring system was established. The three-year, \$3.3 million project of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) to strengthen the capacity of Palestinian customs and border management continued, with the aim of establishing national ownership and technical self-sufficiency of the Automated System for Customs Data.

### **C. United Nations system private sector development**

51. The private sector has been affected severely by the economic crisis in the occupied Palestinian territory. In Gaza, in particular, the private sector has been paralysed. Against this background, United Nations assistance for private sector development was limited during the reporting period.

52. The UNRWA microfinance programme provided a variety of financial services from its network of nine branch offices in the occupied Palestinian territory. The programme financed 10,000 loans (67 per cent of all loans provided by the microfinance sector) to Palestinian microenterprises and households, with an investment of over \$13.29 million. In its efforts to support the private sector, UNCTAD also achieved steady progress in the implementation of a project aimed at establishing a Palestinian shippers' council, which provided a concrete contribution to fostering public-private partnerships and served to facilitate trade and reduce transaction costs.

#### **D. United Nations system emergency assistance**

53. The ongoing emergency in the occupied Palestinian territory continued throughout the reporting period and intensified in the Gaza Strip after Hamas took over the area in June 2007. A comprehensive closure halted all exports and severely limited imports, including of basic necessities and fuel. United Nations agencies and programmes were confronted with ever more difficult access and movement restrictions, while facing increased demand and urgent needs for their emergency provisions. In the West Bank, work on the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan under Prime Minister Fayyad's new Government allowed for a partial refocusing on longer-term development activities, but emergency assistance was still necessary and played a large part in the engagement of the United Nations system.

##### **Emergency food and agriculture support**

54. During the reporting period, UNRWA continued operating its emergency programme to supplement assistance to reach the growing numbers of refugees in critical need. In 2007, UNRWA received \$142 million in emergency funding for the occupied Palestinian territory, representing 58 per cent of budgeted needs. Emergency funding supported the provision of emergency food aid to about 60 per cent of the total registered refugee population of Gaza and West Bank. WFP delivered 35,447.5 metric tons of emergency food aid to approximately 270,000 of the poorest Palestinians not supported by UNRWA, meeting 100 per cent of their basic food needs. In addition, the agency worked with the Ministry of Agriculture to protect the livelihoods of 3,500 poor farmers in the West Bank and 2,350 in Gaza, providing training in agricultural techniques and home-gardening activities with a food-package incentive. Based on a joint pilot initiative with WFP, UNIFEM supported women's centres in the production of daily school snacks, directly benefiting thousands of children. In the Gaza Strip, UNIFEM piloted a school feeding initiative in a refugee camp.

55. FAO, together with the Ministry of Agriculture and other partners, implemented a total of 19 projects focusing on the recovery of crop and animal production, the introduction of aquaculture, support for backyard farming, gardening and cottage industries for women, and emergency assistance for preparedness and response to avian influenza outbreaks. FAO also assisted in technical training in agricultural production and marketing, irrigation and greenhouse rehabilitation, land reclamation, water resource management and the improvement of livestock production, crops and orchards.



### **Emergency employment support**

56. Unemployment continued to pose major challenges, in particular in Gaza. During the reporting period, UNRWA, as part of its emergency job creation programme, employed over 60,000 persons in a range of skilled, unskilled and professional positions. Approximately 30 per cent of all jobholders in the programme were women. UNRWA also expanded its graduate training programme, an initiative that placed recent graduates in posts according to their fields of study. Approximately 4,000 teachers, remedial education workers and support staff were recruited in Gaza to implement special programmes benefiting 200,000 children and youth. In the West Bank, the programme provided up to 6,000 positions each month.

57. WFP employed 33,073 non-refugees in food-for-work activities, 11,380 of them in the Gaza Strip. WFP also employed 1,992 women to bake for school feeding programmes through 30 women's centres in the West Bank. A special employment programme was set up in Gaza to support unpaid municipal workers to continue garbage collection in return for food.

### **Emergency health support**

58. In order to meet emergency health challenges, UNRWA mobile teams continued to assist communities isolated by the barrier and other restrictions on movements through regular visits and the provision of basic health assistance. In partnership with the Ministry of Health, WHO and other partners, UNICEF worked towards preventing disease and mortality among children and improving nutritional conditions. It focused efforts on maternal and newborn care and micronutrient supplementation support for young children and women in a bid to eliminate micronutrient deficiencies, and improved data quality through strengthening the nutrition surveillance system. UNFPA continued to support the Ministry and major health NGOs by providing reproductive health commodities, including essential drugs, disposables and equipment.

59. WFP distributed 225 metric tons of food commodities to Ministry of Health hospitals in the Gaza Strip in order to meet nutritional needs of patients undergoing treatment. The emergency health support of UNIFEM focused on psychosocial counselling, benefiting thousands of women through awareness-raising activities, psychosocial consultations, specialized therapy and training.

### **Emergency education support**

60. In the context of severe conditions in Gaza, with significant deterioration in students' academic achievements owing to class hours lost because of violence and conflict, emergency education support was an important area of engagement for the United Nations. UNRWA implemented summer remedial education classes to help children pass their exams, hired an additional 1,650 support teachers under the job creation programme to help children in grades two, three and four, reduced class sizes for boys and focused the reduced teaching time available on the core subjects of Arabic and mathematics.

61. Beyond Gaza, UNICEF, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, focused on improving enrolment and achievement, ensuring equity in terms of gender, geographical location and special needs. Approximately 7,000 teachers and education administrators were trained on the child-friendly

school concept, and remedial text books, school supplies and uniforms were supplied to over 6,000 pupils in targeted areas. Some 300 schools received supplies of interactive mathematics and science teaching kits, recreation kits or emergency education material. The agency established four teacher education centres, in Hebron, Tulkarem, Jenin and Nablus districts, providing in-service training to at least 2,500 teachers. Ninety new schools with over 15,000 students and teachers benefited from the implementation of child-friendly school project activities. The total number of child-friendly schools is now 190. The UNDP Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People repaired infrastructure in 100 child-friendly schools in collaboration with UNICEF. UNIFEM conducted a pilot academic counselling initiative, targeting rural girls and women. Finally, WFP implemented a pilot school feeding programme in the West Bank, reaching 57,455 children.

### **Emergency infrastructure support**

62. Infrastructure projects in Gaza were severely affected by the continued closure of the crossings. Because of the closure, raw materials became unavailable, and UNRWA had to suspend infrastructure and reconstruction projects valued at an estimated \$93 million. However, UNRWA continued to do repairs for and re-house refugees whose homes had been damaged or destroyed by Israeli military operations. During 2007 1,221 shelters were repaired in Gaza at a total cost of \$1.4 million, and a total of \$3.2 million in relocation fees was provided to 2,000 families whose homes had been destroyed or damaged.

### **Coordination of United Nations assistance**

63. The Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator continued its coordination of United Nations assistance to the Palestinian people and its representation of the United Nations system at donor forums. In this capacity, it participated in the September 2007 and May 2008 meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee. Locally, the Office convened regular coordination meetings of United Nations agencies and programmes and intensified its engagement with the United Nations country team through the work of the Deputy Special Coordinator and Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator. Following the appointment of Quartet representative Blair in July 2007, the Office of the Special Coordinator also served as a liaison between Mr. Blair's office and the United Nations system.

64. Despite a number of positive developments during the reporting period, movement and access restrictions in the West Bank limited the impact of development initiatives aimed at reviving a depreciating economy. In spite of these challenges, the United Nations country team readied itself to begin exploring comprehensive development strategies with an internationally recognized Palestinian Authority. The Office of the Deputy Special Coordinator and Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator hosted the United Nations country team's first Resident Coordinator's retreat in January 2008, during which strategic operational objectives, in support of the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan, were agreed on, providing the basis for a common United Nations country team medium-term response to the Palestinian Authority's objectives over the next three years. Under the leadership of the Deputy Special Coordinator and Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator, a joint United Nations transitional plan was also under preparation, which would coherently organize the support of the United Nations agencies for the

Palestinian Authority's reform and development efforts, and simultaneously cater for humanitarian assistance wherever needed.

65. Gaza, meanwhile, remained almost entirely reliant on humanitarian assistance. Thus, while the United Nations began refocusing on development efforts in the West Bank, it still prepared the third-highest consolidated appeal figure in the world.

66. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs continued humanitarian coordination through the 2008 consolidated appeal and through its ongoing collection of data and reporting on closures, violence and other issues. With field offices throughout the occupied Palestinian territory, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs identified programming gaps, published monthly reports monitoring humanitarian indicators and facilitated NGO projects through the Humanitarian and Emergency Response Fund.

#### **Humanitarian access**

67. Measures of closure and other restrictions on access and movement imposed by the Government of Israel continued to severely hamper United Nations programme implementation throughout the occupied Palestinian territory. Movement restrictions placed on United Nations humanitarian personnel, covered by the United Nations privileges and immunities, meant lost working hours, with staff frequently unable to travel between Jerusalem and the West Bank and Gaza. Between October 2007 and March 2008, a total of 373 incidents of delayed or denied access for humanitarian personnel were documented, up 50 per cent from the previous six months.

68. The closure of the Karni crossing resulted in the interruption of some \$213 million in United Nations and World Bank infrastructure and employment programmes in the Gaza Strip. Restrictions on and delays in the transit of humanitarian goods from Israeli ports to warehousing and distribution points in Gaza and the West Bank added over \$7 million in programme costs.

#### **United Nations media and public information activities**

69. The Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator continued to chair the United Nations country team's Advocacy and Public Information Committee, which coordinates public information activities of agencies and programmes operating in the occupied Palestinian territory. The Committee contributed to coordinating inter-agency statements prepared on behalf of the United Nations country team by the Special Coordinator and to the launch of the consolidated appeal.

## **IV. Donor response to the crisis**

### **Budget and fiscal support**

70. Following the formation of a new Government in the Palestinian Authority and the resumption of political negotiations between the parties, the international donors' conference in Paris saw significant levels of aid pledged. Yet, while the \$7.7 billion in pledges significantly exceeded the requirements outlined in the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan for 2008-2010, their specific distribution (proportions for recurrent budget, public investment and humanitarian assistance)

had yet to be resolved at the time of writing. Donors pledged only \$1.1 billion in recurrent budget support for 2008, \$972 million in investment support and \$651 million in humanitarian assistance. Thus, it appeared that there would be a need to convert some of the development funds pledged to cover shortfalls in the other areas.

71. The international community responded to the needs of the Palestinian Authority by providing flexible mechanisms for support for recurrent expenditures. The European Commission transformed the temporary international mechanism into the Palestinian-European aid mechanism, which provided a budget-support window and direct support for social protection, governance, infrastructure and social development. The World Bank also launched a Palestinian Reform and Development Plan Trust Fund to provide unearmarked support in the context of the policy agenda of that Plan.

### **Support for Palestinian reform**

72. The Government under Prime Minister Fayyad took impressive reform measures in public finance management despite a precarious political and security environment. Cash control procedures were reinstated and a new accounting system launched, enabling regular fiscal reporting. In addition, a General Accounting Department was established and the Ministry of Finance launched a website containing the Palestinian Authority's budget, with plans to include monthly fiscal reports in the near future.

73. A mission of the International Monetary Fund took note of these positive developments, but also encouraged the Government to further consolidate progress in the Palestinian Authority's public financial management system. Other steps taken by the Government to improve fiscal sustainability included the containment of the wage bill and a decrease in net lending for utilities. The Palestinian Authority also began to strengthen its social protection framework by merging various ongoing cash-assistance programmes using a poverty-targeting database to confirm household eligibility.

### **Donor coordination**

74. Aid coordination structures of the Local Development Forum were largely dormant during 2006 and the first half of 2007 because of donor contact policies towards the Hamas-led Palestinian Authority and later the national unity Government. The situation changed in June 2007 when President Abbas appointed a new Government under Prime Minister Fayyad. Donors responded by re-establishing contact with the Palestinian Authority at all levels. The Palestinian Authority initiated a medium-term development and budgeting process, and the aid coordination forums that had been agreed to at the end of 2005 were revived. A meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee took place in New York in September 2007, the first of its kind in 20 months, followed by another such meeting in London in May 2008.

75. Regular Local Development Forum meetings were held in the Prime Minister's office, re-establishing the forum as a venue for preparation of the international donors' conference in Paris and emphasizing the Palestinian Authority's ownership of the coordination structures. The work of the strategy groups shifted from general information-sharing to supporting the Palestinian Authority's development policies.

Donor feedback on the summary of the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan was consolidated through the Local Aid Coordination Secretariat. New sector working groups were initiated, all chaired by a Palestinian Authority line ministry or agency and co-chaired by a donor.

## **V. Challenges ahead**

76. The reporting period was marked by an escalation in the conflict, political and funding uncertainties and new beginnings in development and reform. The conflict remains the single most significant challenge to economic revival and viability in the occupied Palestinian territory, and its final settlement must be a key priority for international engagement.

77. At the same time, the situation on the ground must improve, not least as an enabling measure for a successful political process and the implementation of any peace agreement. Restrictions on Palestinian movement must be eased and the continued division among Palestinians resolved for there to be any immediate, appreciable improvement on the ground. Humanitarian assistance will continue over the coming year, particularly in Gaza. Challenges involved in the movement of humanitarian staff and goods require effective, secure solutions to be found, with the support of both parties and the international community. Specific challenges related to the implementation of programmes in Gaza will also arise in the coming months. Again, all actors must search for new ways to respond effectively to the needs of the population.

78. Despite the ongoing uncertainties, the Palestinian Authority made notable progress in medium- and long-term strategic planning, through its presentation of a budgeted Palestinian Reform and Development Plan. This achievement challenges the United Nations and the wider international community to increase the predictability of funding and programming in 2008 and to ensure that their own programming meets the objectives identified in that Plan. Changing trends in donor funding and the rising costs of commodities also require humanitarian programming to be delivered more efficiently, coordinated more rigorously and targeted in a more focused manner. At the same time, the United Nations must be ready to support Palestinian Authority development goals. The process of establishing shared strategic objectives for United Nations programming, begun early in 2008, will need to translate into a common United Nations programmatic response to the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan.

## **VI. Conclusion**

79. The period under review was volatile and difficult. The political terrain shifted, with a corresponding significant degradation in the quality of life for the population in Gaza. Agencies were compelled to deliver increasing emergency and humanitarian assistance to a population that is otherwise ready for and in need of longer-term development programming. They will continue to do so. At the same time, the United Nations country team is prepared to offer its full support both to the Palestinian Authority, in its efforts to implement its Reform and Development Plan, and to the many Palestinians whose livelihoods and communities have been severely disrupted in these years of conflict.

80. While the coming year promises to be no less challenging, new opportunities could emerge with the implementation of commitments from both parties. Negotiations could bring new approaches and solutions to reach the broader aim of the United Nations, the Quartet and the entire international community to realize a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 1397 (2002) and 1515 (2003), and the establishment of a sovereign, democratic, viable and contiguous Palestinian State, existing side by side in peace with a secure Israel.

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# General Assembly Economic and Social Council

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Item 71 (b) of the preliminary list\*  
**Strengthening of the coordination of  
humanitarian and disaster relief assistance  
of the United Nations, including special  
economic assistance**

**Economic and Social Council  
Substantive session of 2009**  
Geneva, 6-31 July 2009  
Item 9 of the provisional agenda\*\*  
**Implementation of the Declaration on the  
Granting of Independence to Colonial  
Countries and Peoples by the specialized  
agencies and the international institutions  
associated with the United Nations**

## Assistance to the Palestinian people

### Report of the Secretary-General

#### *Summary*

During the period under review, the government of Prime Minister Salam Fayyad made progress on fiscal, monetary and security reforms. Donors disbursed about \$1.8 billion to finance the recurrent budget, which is well above the amount pledged at the Paris donor conference. During the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, held on 2 March 2009, donors pledged approximately \$4.5 billion to support the needs of the Palestinian people.

The overall economic and political situation was challenging. Increased isolation, internal Palestinian divisions and armed conflict led to substantial economic and humanitarian deterioration in the Gaza Strip, where Hamas continued its control. In the West Bank, although Israeli restrictions on movement decreased in some locations, the number of obstacles remained overall the same during the reporting period. Settlements and outposts have expanded and house demolitions have increased, in particular in East Jerusalem. Bilateral political negotiations between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization

\* A/64/50.

\*\* E/2009/100.



continued, but no agreement was reached. Despite various attempts mediated by Egypt, no real progress has been made on intra-Palestinian reconciliation, prisoner exchange or a sustainable ceasefire.

The present report describes efforts made by United Nations agencies, in cooperation with the Palestinian Authority and donors, to support the Palestinian population and institutions.



## I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 63/140, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it, at its sixty-fourth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution, containing an assessment of the assistance received by the Palestinian people and of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them. The reporting period was from May 2008 to April 2009.

2. Information on the living and socio-economic conditions of the Palestinian people is provided in several reports prepared by other United Nations agencies, in particular: (a) the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan (to be issued); (b) the annual report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) (A/63/13); and (c) the Humanitarian Monitor reports of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

3. The humanitarian, economic and development needs of the Palestinian people are reflected in several documents. The consolidated appeals process for 2009 sought \$875 million, including \$615 million for Gaza, to address critical relief needs. The Palestinian Reform and Development Plan for 2008-2010 put forward priority investments in the governance, social, economic and private sectors, and infrastructure development worth \$1.644 billion. The Palestinian National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan for Gaza for 2009-2010 sought \$1.297 billion to support the social, private and governance sectors as well as infrastructure development in the wake of the crisis in Gaza in December 2008 and January 2009. During the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 2 March 2009, donors pledged approximately \$4.5 billion to support the needs of the Palestinian people that were expressed through the above-mentioned documents.

4. Throughout the year, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority continued its efforts to support the peace process and to ensure effective coordination among the Palestinian Authority, the United Nations, the international community and the Government of Israel, as well as to document the economic and social conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory.

5. The present report provides an overview of the work of the United Nations, in cooperation with Palestinian and donor counterparts, to assist the Palestinian people and institutions, as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 63/140. Also included is a summary of key political developments and challenges relevant to the reporting period, as the international community works to alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people and to support the political process among the parties.

## II. Overview of the current situation

### A. Political context

6. Bilateral negotiations between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization continued in 2008 pursuant to the Annapolis Joint Understanding of November 2007. However, the parties failed to reach an agreement. Nor was any agreement reached on the exchange of prisoners. Parallel efforts to improve conditions on the ground and implement the commitments contained in the Quartet's road map achieved mixed success. Meanwhile, the Annapolis framework was consolidated through Security Council resolution 1850 (2008), in which the Council stressed its commitment to the irreversibility of the negotiations and its support for the goal of an agreement addressing all core issues.

7. In the West Bank, the Palestinian Authority carried out security reforms and undertook concrete steps towards improving government institutions. The Government of Israel enhanced security cooperation, especially in the northern West Bank, but continued to carry out military operations. Settlement activity, the demolition of homes and the construction of the barrier continued. Movement and access restrictions remained at a constant high of over 600 obstacles to movement in the West Bank. Movement in and out of the Gaza Strip was severely restricted during the reporting period, with only a very limited number of aid workers allowed in and out of Gaza and hardly any Palestinians, except students, medical cases and pilgrims with specific permits.

8. Intra-Palestinian divisions persisted and rocket and mortar fire from Gaza continued, as did the closure of Gaza crossing points, until a *tahdi'ah*, or lull, between Israel and Hamas, was concluded in June 2008 with the facilitation of Egypt. That led to a substantial decrease in both Israeli incursions and rocket and mortar fire into Israel and a minor relaxation of the closure of Gaza. However, the *tahdi'ah* started to unravel in November 2008. November and December 2008 witnessed a sharp decrease in the quantity of goods, cash and personnel allowed into Gaza. Following the resumption of Israeli military incursions and Hamas rocket fire, Israel launched a ground, air and sea military operation codenamed "Cast Lead" from 27 December 2008 to 18 January 2009. Responding to the developments on the ground, the Security Council, in its resolution 1860 (2009), called for an immediate, durable and sustainable ceasefire, as well as for efforts to prevent the resupply of weapons to Gaza and to open crossings in accordance with the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access.

9. Hostilities ended in the unilateral ceasefires that were declared on 18 and 19 January 2009, following which Palestinian reconciliation efforts resumed. In February, March and April 2009, new rounds of talks were held in Cairo under the aegis of Egypt, with committees focusing on the reform of the Palestine Liberation Organization, security, government, elections and conciliation. On 7 March 2009, Palestinian Prime Minister Fayyad submitted his resignation to facilitate the formation of a consensus government, but President Abbas did not accept it.

10. Elections were held in Israel on 10 February 2009, and a new Prime Minister, Binyamin Netanyahu, was sworn in on 31 March 2009.

## **B. Humanitarian and socio-economic context**

### **Economic and fiscal developments**

11. As a result of the situation in Gaza, the economic situation in the occupied Palestinian territory deteriorated further than envisaged in the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan. Real gross domestic product (GDP) was estimated to have declined by 13 per cent during the reporting period, while per capita income dipped to almost 34 per cent below its 2000 level. In addition, the inflation rate (annual percentage change) increased from 6.9 per cent in December 2007 to 12.5 per cent in July 2008 before falling to 7 per cent in December 2008. Changes in inflation during the year reflected world prices for food and petroleum products. The adverse impact of those factors on economic growth was tempered to some extent by improved security conditions in West Bank cities, as well as donor budgetary assistance that was higher than expected.<sup>1</sup>

12. The government of Prime Minister Fayyad continued to follow a strict government employment policy, freezing wage increases and improving payments of utility bills. The public financial management system was further strengthened. The recurrent fiscal deficit was estimated to have declined to 19 per cent of GDP in 2008, from 24 per cent in 2007, largely reflecting expenditure restraints on wages and reduced utility subsidies. In accordance with the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan, which envisaged the repayment of about NIS 1 billion in arrears owed to public sector employees in a phased manner from 2008 to 2010, the Palestinian Authority fully repaid all public and private arrears in 2008. This measure helped cushion the impact of the higher-than-expected inflation on the real incomes of the Palestinian Authority employees.

13. The Palestinian Monetary Authority continued to make progress in 2008 in internal reform and capacity development, including in strengthening their supervisory and governance framework. A Macroprudential Division was created, and progress was made in establishing an early warning system. A new credit registry allowed banks to better evaluate risks, reduce collateral requirements and improve credit flow. The financial legal framework was also strengthened, while an anti-money-laundering law has been in force since 2007.

14. The economic situation in Gaza deteriorated markedly during the reporting period, owing mainly to its increased isolation and the crisis of December 2008-January 2009. The restrictions on the entry of cash into Gaza decreased depositors' confidence in banks and further reduced the ability of Gaza's population to meet its basic needs. The liquidity crisis, which had already begun in June 2007, led in the reporting period to a non or partial payment of salaries for Palestinian Authority employees, social hardship cases supported by the European Commission's PEGASE mechanism and for the programmes of UNRWA. If it continues, the liquidity shortage could lead to unprecedented financial losses.

### **Humanitarian and social-economic developments**

15. Violence reached high levels during the conduct of the Israeli military operation Cast Lead, during which 1,440 Palestinians were killed and 5,380

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<sup>1</sup> IMF: macroeconomic and fiscal framework for the West Bank and Gaza: third review of progress, February 2009.

injured.<sup>2</sup> The operation also led to 13 Israeli fatalities and approximately 518 injuries.<sup>3</sup> Excluding the casualties incurred during operation Cast Lead, 178 Palestinians were killed (40 in the West Bank, compared with 82 during the previous reporting period, 138 in Gaza, compared with 605 during the previous reporting period) and a further 1,746 were injured (1,518 in the West Bank and 228 in Gaza). A total of twelve Israelis were killed by Palestinians and 192 were injured (compared with 23 killed and 347 injured during the previous reporting period). Militants in Gaza launched over 2,000 rockets and mortar shells towards communities in Israel during the reporting period. Between 1 May and 31 December 2008, 79 Palestinians were killed and 422 were injured in intra-Palestinian fighting.

16. Overall humanitarian conditions deteriorated, with increased unemployment and poverty, especially in Gaza, as a result of continued closure. The 2008 unemployment rate was estimated to be 40 per cent in Gaza and 19 per cent in the West Bank, up from an average of 30 per cent and 18 per cent in 2007. Data from a 2007 household survey found that 80 per cent of households in Gaza were living below the poverty line compared with 45 per cent in the West Bank.<sup>1</sup> Global increases in food prices over the past 12 months and reduced domestic agricultural yields due to adverse weather conditions placed further strains on the coping mechanisms of the Palestinians. Consequently, food insecurity in both Gaza and the West Bank increased,<sup>4</sup> despite ongoing large-scale food aid, job creation and cash assistance programmes. Furthermore, ongoing internal Palestinian divisions disrupted basic and community services.

17. Throughout the reporting period, most of the United Nations projects were halted owing to the lack of materials in Gaza. It became increasingly difficult to carry out humanitarian operations, and in November 2008, the Israeli authorities further restricted access of aid workers as well as delivery of commercial and humanitarian goods into Gaza. Those restrictions caused suspensions of food aid by UNRWA and the World Food Programme (WFP).

18. The already fragile situation in Gaza, which was under the de facto control of Hamas, deteriorated following the Israeli military operation Cast Lead, which lasted from 27 December 2008 to 18 January 2009. The operation resulted in extensive destruction of and damage to homes and the public infrastructure, as well as some United Nations and government facilities. An estimated 21,000 homes were destroyed or badly damaged in the fighting.<sup>5</sup> At the height of the fighting, nearly 51,000 people were displaced in shelters, and a larger number of people were believed to be living with host families.<sup>6</sup> The impact of the violence compounded the already serious humanitarian situation that had been caused by the 18 months of sustained closure of Gaza to all but the most essential commodities.

### **Movement and access**

19. The Government of Israel took some steps towards removing obstacles and easing movement in the West Bank. However, the overall number of obstacles remained relatively stable during the reporting period, from 607 physical obstacles

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<sup>2</sup> Gaza Ministry of Health figures. Independently verified figures not yet available.

<sup>3</sup> Report of the National Society of the International Red Cross Movement in Israel, January 2009.

<sup>4</sup> WFP Food Security and Market Monitoring Report Number 19, July 2008.

<sup>5</sup> The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, February 2009.

<sup>6</sup> Consolidated Appeal Process 2009, p.1.

in April 2008 to 626 physical obstacles in February 2009.<sup>7</sup> The barrier and permit regime continued to restrict the access of Palestinians living in the West Bank to East Jerusalem and Israel. However, there was an increase in work permits granted to Palestinians to enter Israel and East Jerusalem, from 21,000 in 2007 to 23,000 in 2008.

20. No progress was made on the targets of the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access, including the construction of the seaport or airport and the link between Gaza and the West Bank. Medical referrals for Gaza's residents to travel for outside treatment continued to require permits issued by the Israeli authorities. Between 1 May 2008 and 15 April 2009, 63 per cent (4,376 out of 6,960) of those who had been referred for medical treatment outside of Gaza received permits and visited the medical facility to which they had been referred. Access to medical facilities has been further complicated by the intra-Palestinian dispute that erupted after Hamas seized control over the Palestinian Referral Abroad Department on 22 March 2009.

21. Gaza's crossings remained closed for most of 2008, and smuggling through the tunnels played an increasing role in the economy. Some humanitarian assistance was allowed to enter Gaza, including the bulk entry of wheat grain, medicines and limited amounts of educational materials, but it proved to be very difficult to import other humanitarian goods, such as cement and generators. Moreover, UNRWA was long unable to bring paper into Gaza to print its human rights curriculum, while the Agency's emergency food aid programme was suspended on two occasions in 2008 due to lack of supplies. UNRWA continued to face difficulties in importing plastic for bags for its food distribution.

22. The Erez crossing point, the only passage for movement of people between Gaza and the West Bank via Israel, remained virtually closed after June 2007, except for representatives of foreign media, who were denied access in November 2008, and international aid organizations. Karni, the main crossing point for goods, continued to be closed as from June 2007, except for the conveyer belt. The Rafah crossing also remained officially closed, although a few hundred Palestinians, mainly persons seeking medical care, students and pilgrims, were able to cross each month for specific purposes.

23. During the reporting period, an average of 8.5 per cent of weekly needs of petrol, 26.0 per cent of diesel, 34.2 per cent of cooking gas and 59 per cent of industrial fuel came in through the Nahal Oz crossing, the only one technically equipped to handle fuel imports. The situation became particularly dire in December 2008, when Nahal Oz was open for only seven days. During that time, only 2 per cent of daily needs of petrol, 5 per cent of diesel, 12 per cent of cooking gas and 20 per cent of industrial gas entered.<sup>8</sup> Since then, there has been a ban on imports of petrol and diesel, except for small quantities delivered to UNRWA. Rationing of cooking gas for households and commercial and public use persists.

24. Israel continued to place restrictions on the types of commodities allowed to enter and exit Gaza, further crippling the already much reduced private sector and compromising the provision of basic services. A lack of cash led to fears that the banking sector would collapse and prevented the full provision of salaries to the

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<sup>7</sup> Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Humanitarian Monitor, West Bank closure updates.

<sup>8</sup> Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Humanitarian Monitor, December 2008.

Palestinian Authority employees and the provision of emergency cash assistance to the most vulnerable refugees.

### **Barrier**

25. Barrier construction within the occupied Palestinian territory in deviation from the Green Line continued despite the advisory opinion rendered by the International Court of Justice in July 2004 and the adoption by the General Assembly of resolutions ES-10/17 on 15 December 2006. As of August 2008, 57.2 per cent (415 km) of the planned route of the barrier (725 km) had been completed, and 62 km were under construction. The pace of construction has been slow since the previous report, and updated figures are not yet available. The United Nations Register of Damage Caused by the Construction of the Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which was established pursuant to resolution ES-10/17, commenced unimpeded its outreach and claim intake activities in Jenin Governorate, which was the first to have been affected by the construction of the barrier. Over 1,000 claim forms for registration of damage have been collected, and a number of them were reviewed by the Board of the Register of Damage and included in the Register. The Palestinian Authority, in particular the local authorities, cooperated fully and provided the necessary assistance. However, the Government of Israel continued to state that any claims in relation to damage caused by the barrier should be addressed through existing Israeli mechanisms. At the same time, the secretariat of the Register of Damage has experienced no practical difficulties in carrying out its activities on the ground as set forth in resolution ES-10/17.

## **III. United Nations response**

26. United Nations agencies and programmes continued to fulfil their responsibilities and mandates to the best of their abilities. They adjusted to a situation characterized by a continued de facto political split between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, the isolation of Gaza and the Israeli military operation “cast lead” in December 2008 and January 2009. As a result of the latter, a Gaza Flash Appeal was launched on 2 February, immediately after the ceasefire went into effect. A donors conference was held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 2 March 2009 to help rebuild Gaza, which resulted in pledges of approximately \$4.5 billion.

27. Not only were Gaza and the West Bank politically divided during the reporting period, but the type of international assistance received by each also differed profoundly. While development strategies, community-based projects, technical capacity-building and budget support formed the basis of external assistance in the West Bank, in Gaza the focus was purely on emergency assistance, which deepened the policy divide.

### **A. Human and social development**

#### **Education**

28. UNRWA continued to provide free education to over 250,000 pupils in 315 elementary and preparatory schools in the West Bank and Gaza. An estimated

\$80 million was disbursed during the 2008/09 school year through this activity. The Agency provided skills and pre-service teacher training to over 3,000 persons. UNRWA launched the violence-free schools initiative in all schools and carried out training on codes of conduct in schools. In response to the deterioration of school standards in Gaza, a new “schools of excellence” scheme was implemented in 221 schools, which improved school governance, established a teacher training college and launched a special needs initiative.

29. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) provided technical assistance through teacher education, educational planning and management programmes, which led to the launch of a national teacher education strategy in May 2008. UNESCO launched a technical assistance programme worth euro 3.4 million to establish national systems and operational frameworks to implement the strategy and the Palestinian five-year education plan, and served as technical adviser to the educational sector working group. UNESCO also assisted in setting up career guidance for the educational system as a whole, in particular for technical and vocational education.

30. The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and UNRWA developed a joint pilot programme for child-friendly schools, providing an additional opportunity for six government and four UNRWA schools to develop the child-friendly school concept. A workshop was held for trainers and a plan of action was developed for implementation in 2009. UNICEF provided 1,100 mathematics and science teaching kits to schools, especially to those in disadvantaged areas in the West Bank and Gaza. Training on the utilization of the kits was conducted for 1,000 teachers. UNICEF also provided support for the re-establishment of libraries in 30 government schools and in 20 community centres. More than 4,000 children participated in reading as an extracurricular activity. After-school programmes were also implemented in 50 schools for girls. UNICEF provided equipment for the deployment of an education management information system in eight districts, which included 100 schools with the lowest performance.

31. The World Bank provided support to the Ministry of Education and Higher Education with a particular focus on enhancing the regulatory environment for tertiary education management, governance and quality assurance, as well as on promoting the internal and external efficiency of the tertiary education system. The project, funded by the World Bank (\$10 million) and the European Commission (euro 5 million), provided funds to 39 tertiary education institutions to enhance their institutional self-assessment and strategic planning departments. In addition, the World Bank provides support to the Palestinian Authority’s Education Sector Development Plan, the 2009 workplan and budget, with a total contribution of \$5 million to \$10 million.

32. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People provided support to the Ministry of Education and Higher Education through a grant of \$7.5 million for the construction of four new schools, the rehabilitation of 12 schools and the provision of information and telecommunications equipment to 200 schools. The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) provided support to the Palestinian Rural Women’s Access to Academic Counselling project in 21 locations throughout the occupied Palestinian territory, which led to the establishment of study centres in 24 locations, 156 academic counselling sessions, and open hours provided to 8,000 rural women.

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) continued to build the capacity of teachers, school counsellors, school health-care staff, and school health committee coordinators for in-school information and counselling activities.

### **Health**

33. UNRWA operated 56 health-care facilities in Gaza and the West Bank at a cost of \$45 million. The Agency's medical staff carried out over 5,300,000 consultations in those facilities as the demand for primary health-care services continued to rise. UNRWA also supported environmental health projects in Gaza through the delivery of 1,000 tonnes of diesel fuel to providers of basic utility services, such as water, sewage pumping and solid waste collection.

34. UNFPA trained community health-care workers on safe childbirth and deployed them in remote areas and provided technical and financial support to both governmental and non-governmental organizations in strengthening the delivery of psychosocial services to young people. UNFPA also rehabilitated two maternity wards and provided medical equipment to four others. The Fund also provided emergency obstetric care and outreach services to 30 isolated communities. The UNDP Programme of Assistance supported the construction and rehabilitation of three hospitals and three mental health facilities and facilitated the training of staff, general practitioners and nurses.

35. The technical programmes of the World Health Organization (WHO), amounting to \$1.4 million, facilitated the establishment of a mental health unit within the Ministry of Health to lead mental health reform in the occupied Palestinian territory, provide training and education, and establish a non-governmental organization for family associations. In addition, WHO disbursed up to \$90,000 to establish a national committee for non-communicable diseases.

36. With the support of WHO, the Ministry of Health successfully prepared the 2008-2010 National Strategic Health Plan. WHO supported the Ministry in developing treatment protocols for a number of chronic conditions and training in using them, as well as in introducing new WHO growth standards and in building the capacity of central public health laboratories to monitor levels of micronutrients in fortified foods and in the population. WHO also continued to support the Nutrition Department of the Ministry of Health and initiated the establishment of an effective nutrition surveillance system, while UNICEF supported the formulation and adoption of a national policy on infant and young child feeding practices, and the new code on breast milk substitutes.

37. UNICEF provided support to the Ministry of Health through a programme, worth \$3 million, aimed at maintaining vaccine security and availability of essential drugs and equipment under the Integrated Management of Childhood Illness initiative. This was complemented by the provision of direct support for improved management of the Expanded Programme on Immunization and cold chain capacity, resulting in sustained, high immunization coverage of more than 97 per cent of all infants from birth to 11 months of age.

38. The United Nations thematic group on HIV/AIDS, chaired by UNFPA, started an \$11 million project to combat HIV in the occupied Palestinian territory. The project, which is supported by the global fund to combat HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis



and malaria is designed to halt the spread of HIV and sexually transmitted infections and improve the quality of life of those affected.

### **Employment**

39. The International Labour Organization (ILO) and the UNDP Programme of Assistance supported the Ministry of Labour in establishing an Employment Support and Policy Committee, and provided technical assistance to the Employment Directorate and the local labour offices in the West Bank to improve management of labour markets and the provision of services. In addition, under its agreement with the Palestinian Authority, ILO conducted a skills introductory and validation workshop for in-depth mapping and analysis of technical and vocational education and training. ILO also provided policy recommendations for decision makers, experts and practitioners on the potential of the cooperative sector.

40. As part of the \$30 million programme of the Islamic Development Bank, the UNDP Programme of Assistance channelled \$4.8 million through comprehensive packages of financial and non-financial services to 1,400 poor Palestinian families, which became independent income providers in both West Bank and Gaza. The UNDP Programme of Assistance spent an additional \$2 million on short-term employment opportunities for poor unemployed workers in Gaza through activities aimed at improving environmental conditions, such as cleaning Gaza's beaches, towns and villages. The Programme implemented projects valued at \$1.6 million, which generated over 700,000 workdays in 260 locations in the West Bank and Gaza. UNRWA created 3.2 million workdays for 57,000 refugees and provided training in Gaza for 2,000 unemployed university graduates. UNIFEM trained 80 women from 28 women's centres in the West Bank in the management of school canteens in the 2008/09 academic year, and provided support to 15 women in the production of snacks for 63,000 kindergarteners. The women each earned an average salary of \$150 per month.

41. The Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education approved the implementation of the ILO entrepreneurial education training toolkit "Know about business". The project, which was also supported by the UNDP Programme of Assistance, aimed developing positive attitude towards entrepreneurship and self-employment.

### **Targeted social assistance**

42. Through its Special Hardship Case Programme, worth \$184 per person per year, UNRWA distributed 496,316 food and cash subsidy packages on a quarterly basis to 30,500 households (including around two thirds in Gaza). A new poverty-based approach to social safety net assistance was also introduced through a pilot programme in Gaza. UNRWA also supported 21 community-based rehabilitation centres in promoting and equalizing opportunities for persons with disabilities. The rehabilitation centres provided services to 11,628 persons. The World Bank provided cash benefits to 25,000 households, as well as technical assistance to support the Ministry of Social Affairs in carrying out reforms of the social safety net, costing \$25 million. In addition, the UNDP Programme of Assistance started to distribute \$50 million in cash assistance to Gaza's population.

43. The World Bank covered non-salary-based recurrent expenditure with around \$90 million for the Ministries of Health, Education and Social Affairs in order to

maintain a network of public social services for all Palestinians, and in particular the poor and most vulnerable.

### **Cultural heritage**

44. UNESCO assisted the Ministries of Culture and Tourism and Antiquities by developing and implementing a number of projects involving the Riwaya Museum in Bethlehem and the protective shelters and visitors' facilities at Hisham's Palace in Jericho, and in the Bethlehem and Nablus Governorates.

### **Human rights, women, children and youth**

45. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) organized a series of workshops on the universal periodic review mechanism of the Human Rights Council to support civil society groups in their access to international human rights mechanisms and to promote accountability. The Office trained police officers of the Police Academy in Jericho and Prosecutors in Ramallah in human rights standards and mechanisms. OHCHR also trained 66 teachers at the primary and secondary levels in Ramallah, Nablus and Bethlehem in issues related to addressing children's priority needs in conflict situations.

46. In order to promote the advancement of refugee women as partners in the development process, UNRWA supported 26 Women Programme Centres and, in the course of 2008, 3,094 women attended courses in computer literacy, first aid, hairdressing and sewing. Many programmes targeted the entire community so as to promote women's self-reliance. A total of 22,403 persons attended awareness-raising lectures and 6,775 people sought advice from legal aid bureaux housed in the community centres. UNRWA also introduced the equality in action programme to address the needs of Palestinian girls and women in Gaza. The initiative was designed to address inequality at all levels of social, economic and political life.

47. The UNDP Programme of Assistance established two women's vocational training centres in the towns of Nuseirat and Jabalia (Gaza Strip) offering access to social and economic services to women and their families, and established a community development house in Silwan in East Jerusalem. The Programme also provided vocational training to more than 1,850 women. ILO facilitated a number of gender workshops for employees of the Ministries of Women's Affairs and Labour and Planning, and of the Federation of Palestinian Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture, and the Palestine General Federation of Trade Unions.

48. UNFPA worked on strengthening community-based organizations established to institutionalize the provisions contained in Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and to provide health services, counselling, microcredit and health education. In addition, UNFPA worked with the Ministry of Women's Affairs to establish a national committee for combating gender-based violence.

49. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) provided emergency support and employment generation, worth \$904,149, to 4,550 households headed by women through backyard farming and cottage industries. Through training in food processing and cottage industries and through marketing initiatives, FAO sought to make those income-generating activities sustainable. In order to promote agricultural entrepreneurship skills among youth in Gaza, FAO provided training in small-scale farming to 480 young persons in 4 schools in Gaza and

12 schools in the West Bank through its Junior Farmer Field and Life School training schemes.

50. UNICEF implemented projects in the area of child protection, worth \$2.9 million, and worked with community leaders to disseminate child protection messages, develop psychosocial services and coordinate reporting on child-protection issues, including those set out in Security Council resolution 1612 (2005).

51. UNFPA provided technical and financial support to governmental and non-governmental organizations in order to strengthen their delivery of psychosocial services to young people and to provide economic opportunities to young university graduates. In 2008, 23,090 young persons were provided with psychosocial support and 100 with economic opportunities.

52. The Summer Games 2008, sponsored by UNRWA, which is the largest recreational youth initiative to have taken place in Gaza to date, catered to over a quarter of a million participants over a period of 10 weeks. The activities provided included swimming and a variety of sports, arts and crafts, environmental activities and field trips to the newly opened Museum of Archaeology in Gaza.

### **Environment**

53. The UNDP Programme of Assistance disbursed \$390,000 to improve medical waste management in the Ramallah district. The Programme helped prepare needs-assessment reports for Ramallah Hospital and for the municipality of Ramallah, and a Medical Waste Management Manual for the Ramallah Governmental Hospital and the Ramallah municipality. Medical waste regulations and guidelines were revised, and several public awareness tools were produced.

54. The UNDP Programme of Assistance and the Palestinian Environment Quality Authority prepared an assessment of the climate change situation in the occupied Palestinian territory and with the intention of developing a climate change adaptation strategy which will be used to raise funds for climate change interventions. The Programme of Assistance also conducted two scoping workshops in 2008 at which the preliminary findings of the questionnaire on climate change were presented.

## **B. United Nations system emergency assistance**

55. Approximately 70 per cent of the population in Gaza was dependent on external assistance prior to the Israeli military operation Cast Lead in December 2008 and January 2009; however, access restrictions on people and goods led to many projects, notably those related to water and sanitation, being put on hold throughout the reporting period. Approximately 34.5 per cent of the Palestinian population in the West Bank was affected by deep income poverty, primarily because of movement restrictions within and into and out of the West Bank.

56. Prior to operation Cast Lead, some 1.8 million Palestinians, including over two thirds of the population of Gaza, received food assistance from UNRWA and WFP, while a further 100,000 children in Gaza and 57,000 in the West Bank benefited from a school feeding programme. In the water, sanitation and hygiene sector, interventions included the provision of an emergency water supply for Palestinian communities in rural areas of Gaza and the West Bank, and fuel for Gaza Strip

municipalities and solid waste management councils. The creation of short-term jobs and cash assistance projects supported an estimated 65,000 poor households in Gaza and the West Bank, and cash grants were provided to 30,000 poor refugee families in the occupied Palestinian territory.

57. During operation Cast Lead, UNRWA provided temporary shelter to over 50,000 Palestinians who sought refuge in over 50 Agency schools. Critical operations, including food distribution and health-care services, continued to the extent possible, with around 1,000 of the Agency's 10,000 Palestinian staff in Gaza working throughout the crisis. Following the declaration by Israel of a ceasefire on 18 January 2009, UNRWA expanded emergency operations to meet additional humanitarian needs and support recovery and rehabilitation. The Agency increased its emergency food aid rolls from 550,000 to 900,000 refugees and also provided financial and in kind support to thousands of refugee families left homeless as a result of the military operation.

### **Emergency food and agriculture support**

58. WFP interventions reached 109,178 beneficiaries in the West Bank and 85,504 in Gaza, of which 5,000 were hospital patients and elderly who received special food rations. A total of 21,600 tonnes of wheat flour, vegetable oil, chickpeas, sugar and salt were distributed under that intervention. In the West Bank, 43,040 beneficiaries were assisted with 26,622 tonnes of food supplies, and 172,000 vulnerable persons received 9,600 tonnes of food in Gaza.

59. Between April 2008 and March 2009, 50,136 schoolchildren in the West Bank received a ration of nutrition biscuits and milk. In Gaza, the school feeding programme started after the operation Cast Lead and, to date, has reached about 50,000 schoolchildren, with 546 tonnes of high-energy biscuits, date bars, milk, canned meat and ready-to-eat meals.

60. Since 27 December 2008, WFP continuously provided assistance to Gaza's population and distributed 5,567 tonnes of food to approximately 346,000 beneficiaries through emergency distributions of bread, date bars, high-energy biscuits and ready-to-eat meals, including approximately 40,000 schoolchildren assisted through the school feeding programme, which started at the end of January 2009. Following the conflict, WFP increased its caseload by an additional 100,000 individuals in order to assist those who had lost homes, jobs and productive assets.

61. In 2008, UNRWA provided emergency food assistance to approximately 700,000 refugees in Gaza and 300,000 in the West Bank. A school feeding programme was also introduced in Gaza and extended to all 200,000 refugee pupils in Agency schools at the start of the 2008/09 school year. UNRWA also disbursed \$12 million in cash to 30,000 poor refugee families during 2008, including those who had been made homeless as a result of military operations, drought or flood, and \$6 million in Gaza to cover back-to-school costs for poor refugees.

62. In order to support the agricultural sector and improve food security through the strengthening of local production, FAO distributed agricultural inputs to 3,725 smallholder farming families and 2,500 herder families, accompanied by training to promote improved agricultural practices and herder capacities. Similarly, 700 fishermen and their dependants received support through the establishment of aquaculture ponds and the provision of fingerlings.

63. The UNDP Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People signed an agreement with the Palestinian Authority totalling \$270 million to compensate farmers whose agricultural property in Gaza had been damaged during the military operation Cast Lead.

#### **Emergency education support**

64. UNICEF distributed 50,000 schoolbags and stationery items and provided uniforms to students affected by the flooding of the sewage plant in the Gaza Strip. In the immediate aftermath to the Gaza crisis, UNICEF procured and distributed 160 math teaching kits for 12,800 children, 100,000 notebooks and 200 recreation kits for 18,000 children, 480 “school in a box” sets for 38,400 children, 166 science teaching kits for 913,280 children, 2,000 student profile forms and four school tents at an estimated cost of \$275,000.

#### **Emergency health support**

65. During the crisis in Gaza, UNRWA provided additional storage space for the blood bank, central drug store and forklifts, as well as fuel and other support, such as logistics. UNICEF provided a generator to each of two blood banks in Gaza, 457,500 doses of vaccines as part of a multi-antigen immunization catch-up campaign for infants and pregnant women, and mumps, measles and rubella vaccines for 14,000 schoolchildren aged 13 to 15. Obstetric and midwifery medical kits were provided to 900 mothers and their infants, and 98,000 kilograms of pharmaceuticals were provided as part of emergency triage. In the West Bank, UNRWA operated five mobile health clinics serving 150 isolated locations, in particular those affected by the barrier. The clinics provided approximately 156,000 patients with primary health-care services, treatment for non-communicable diseases and vaccines.

### **C. United Nations system support to Palestinian institutions**

66. The Palestinian Authority continued to introduce institution-building and prudent fiscal policies and reforms. The Palestinian Authority also worked increasingly towards achieving an integrated planning and budgeting process. The 2009 budget envisaged further reforms and deficit reduction with a significant shift in the composition of spending away from wages and subsidies towards public investment. A supplementary budget is being prepared to include spending for Gaza’s reconstruction and rehabilitation. During 2008, the Palestinian Authority made substantial progress in establishing security in several Palestinian cities in the West Bank, which led to improved business confidence. However, progress in the development of sector-specific strategies was relatively slow.

67. The World Bank spent \$10 million to improve accounting systems, financial management and budgetary controls, and physical and investment planning of municipalities. As a result, the Ministry of Local Government approved a chart of accounts in 132 municipalities and piloted the valuation method of fixed assets in 8 municipalities. In addition, an integrated financial management system was developed and rolled out to municipalities.

68. FAO supported the Ministry of Agriculture by managing the agricultural project information system database, which records all agricultural projects in the

West Bank and Gaza. FAO and WFP collaborated with the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics to establish a socio-economic and food security monitoring system. In addition, FAO worked with the Ministry of Agriculture to build national capacity to prevent avian influenza, including through the provision of technical equipment, and training of veterinary professionals to raise their ability to respond to a potential outbreak.

69. The UNDP Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People supported the preparation of a comprehensive district strategic development planning manual and a strategic development plan for the town of Jenin on the basis of several diagnostic studies and assessments in the district. A local governance integrity toolkit was developed for the occupied Palestinian territory and tested in 15 local governments in the West Bank. The Programme also supported the building of a new courthouse in Jenin that included case management software.

70. The UNDP Programme of Assistance helped the Ministry of Finance to publish monthly financial reports on its website. A workshop was organized on the drafting of regulations on conflicts of interest and the protection of whistle-blowers in corruption cases and to amend related articles of the Palestinian penal code. The Programme also supported the training of property tax employees of the Ministry of Finance in the areas of geographic information systems, accounting, tax collection and management.

71. The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) provided support, mainly through the Ministry of the Interior, to the Palestinian civil police, civil defence and presidential guard, and built capacity in project development within the civil police through the creation of a Programme Steering Committee. UNOPS also completed the master plan for the Karni commercial crossing upgrade.

72. The activities of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) to bolster Palestinian economic governance registered significant progress in the area of customs modernization. As part of the Palestinian Authority's renewed development efforts, the system was launched in 2008.

73. UNIFEM supported the Police Department of the Ministry of the Interior by conducting a police partnership training programme on violence against women for 46 police officers and members of the security forces. As a result, the Police Department drafted a code of conduct for police officers dealing with cases in which women were victims of violence. UNIFEM also assisted the Ministry of Social Affairs in defining its role and outlining its institutional set-up for the full operation of the Mehwar Centre, the only shelter for survivors of violence against women in the occupied Palestinian territory.

74. Through the Municipal Development and Lending Fund, the World Bank provided grants amounting to \$10 million to municipalities in the West Bank and Gaza for capital investment, job creation and service delivery programmes in 132 municipalities. In addition, the World Bank disbursed \$10 million under the community-driven development project to promote the merging of local government units through joint projects in the West Bank and Gaza. The project was implemented with the Ministry of Local Government and improved cooperation among local government units, targeted nine joint service councils in the West Bank serving 148,788 persons, and 16 neighbourhoods in Gaza serving 108,289 persons.

## **D. Private sector development**

75. In 2008, UNRWA financed over two thirds of all 12,000 loans, amounting to \$18.97 million, provided to Palestinian microenterprises and households. The split in the Palestinian polity had a direct impact on the sustainability of the loan programme. In Gaza in 2008, the programme financed nearly 3,000 loans worth \$5.05 million, compared with 9,000 loans worth \$13.92 million in the West Bank. Despite the situation in Gaza, UNRWA covered 117 per cent of its running costs of \$3.18 million from its credit operations.

76. UNCTAD finalized the establishment of the Palestinian Shippers' Council, which has assumed the established status as a focal point for addressing the concerns of Palestinian shippers. In close coordination with the Palestinian Investment Promotion Agency, UNCTAD completed a project on an investment retention programme. Key achievements included a programme tailored for current investors in the occupied Palestinian territory.

## **E. Coordination of United Nations assistance**

77. The Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process continued to coordinate United Nations assistance to the Palestinian people and represented the United Nations at coordination forums. In that capacity, the Office participated in two meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for Assistance to the Palestinian People in London and New York, and regular meetings of the local development forum. Under the leadership of the Deputy Special Coordinator, the United Nations country team started to prepare the United Nations medium-term response plan, which is expected to better coordinate and organize United Nations agency support to Palestinian priorities, as articulated in the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan for 2008-2010 and the Palestinian National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan for Gaza for 2009-2010.

78. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs prepared the 2009 consolidated appeals process document for \$875 million, conducted assessments, monitored the situation on the ground, provided logistics to facilitate the humanitarian response and reported on closures, incidents of violence and other humanitarian developments. The Office facilitated the implementation of projects by non-governmental organizations and United Nations agencies through the Humanitarian and the Emergency Response Fund and the Central Emergency Response Fund.

79. In July 2008, United Nations humanitarian agencies and international and national non-governmental organizations established a humanitarian country team, modelled on the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, to agree on joint advocacy messages and responses. In addition, a humanitarian task force, comprising representatives of the humanitarian country team, the Palestinian Authority and donors, was set up to coordinate humanitarian assistance, monitor progress of humanitarian programmes and promote a collaborative approach among all stakeholders.

### **Humanitarian access**

80. An access support team was established to facilitate humanitarian access by documenting incidents of delayed or denied access for United Nations staff. In addition, in order to improve humanitarian access, the United Nations humanitarian country team and the Humanitarian Liaison Working Group endorsed the framework for the provision of humanitarian assistance, which addressed the constraints encountered by humanitarian actors operating in Gaza and outlined possible advocacy messages to be used with the Government of Israel, the Palestinian Authority and de facto authorities in Gaza.

## **IV. Donor response to the crisis**

### **Budgetary and fiscal support**

81. Following the finalization of the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan in April 2008, donors increasingly programmed their support based on Palestinian Authority priorities as contained in the Plan. Donors disbursed up to \$1.8 billion in 2008 to finance the recurrent budget, compared with \$1 billion in 2007, and well above the amount pledged at the donors conference in Paris in 2007. The implementation of donor-financed development projects, however, was slower than expected.

82. At the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 2 March 2009, at which the Palestinian Authority presented the Palestinian National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan for Gaza 2009-2010, total pledges amounted to some \$4.5 billion for the West Bank and Gaza, in addition to \$0.7 billion in reconfirmed past pledges. The largest pledges came from Saudi Arabia (\$1 billion), the European Union (€40 million), the United States of America (\$0.9 billion), Qatar (\$250 million) and Kuwait (\$200 million). However, none of the pledges are earmarked for specific purposes or agencies, nor are they linked to a timeline for transfer of funds.

83. Donor pledges for 2009/10 budgetary support are insufficient as they only amount to about \$0.5 billion according to the Paris donor conference pledges in December 2007. There is therefore a pressing need to secure adequate external assistance to finance the budget deficit for 2009. External financing requirements for recurrent expenditures stand at \$1.2 billion in 2009 compared with \$1.8 billion in 2008. This should make it easier for donors to finance the increase in public investment, which was projected at \$0.5 billion for 2009, in addition to the \$1.3 billion requested by the Palestinian Authority to address the conflict-related recovery and reconstruction of Gaza. In terms of humanitarian needs, 32.4 per cent of the consolidated appeal (\$284 million) was funded as of 6 April 2009.

### **Donor coordination**

84. Frequent aid coordination meetings took place at all levels in 2008. Two ministerial meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for Assistance to the Palestinian People were held, one in London in May 2008, and one in New York in September 2008, to examine progress on the tripartite agreements among the Government of Israel, the Palestinian Authority and the international community.



The Palestinian Authority drafted an aid harmonization action plan as well as a set of partnership principles in order to better coordinate external financial and technical support. The Ad Hoc Liaison Committee agreed in New York in September 2008 to re-establish the tripartite coordination mechanism among the Government of Israel, the Palestinian Authority and representatives of the international community at the local level, namely through the Joint Liaison Committee, which met only once, in December 2008. In the lead-up to the Conference in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, members of the international community coordinated their support to the Palestinian Authority in developing the Palestinian National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan for Gaza for 2009-2010.

## **V. Challenges**

85. Gaza's established crossings remained closed for most of 2008, an armed conflict broke out at the end of the year, talks on intra-Palestinian reconciliation were inconclusive and there was no significant progress in negotiations between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization. In the West Bank, closures, settlement activity and house demolitions continued. Those factors posed significant challenges to the economic revival of the occupied Palestinian territory and to an effective response to humanitarian needs.

86. Despite the relative calm prevailing in Gaza at present, without a durable and sustainable ceasefire as called for by the Security Council in its resolution 1860 (2009), the humanitarian situation in Gaza is likely to remain critical and volatile. While funding is essential for the 2009 consolidated appeal, the Palestinian National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan for Gaza for 2009-2010 as well as for the budget of the Palestinian Authority, it will remain impossible to meet the needs in the occupied Palestinian territory without a full opening of all crossings into Gaza and a significant easing of restrictions of movement into, out of and within the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Relief items, equipment and construction material, and spare parts need to be allowed into Gaza, as should the free movement of goods and persons, the free and sustained movement of humanitarian personnel, and regular cash flows. Improvements must be made in order to allow the population in the West Bank access to livelihoods and social services and to maintain normal social and economic relations.

## **VI. Conclusions**

87. The operational context for the United Nations in the period under review led to a two-pronged approach: (a) increasingly refocusing attention on longer-term economic, infrastructure, capacity-building and service delivery interventions in the West Bank; and (b) delivering emergency and life sustaining interventions in Gaza. However, United Nations agencies and programmes continued to face severe restrictions and obstacles that made the delivery of assistance more urgent, but also more difficult. In the light of the recent conflict in Gaza, the delivery of emergency and humanitarian assistance will continue to be critical. However, efforts to support the long-term recovery of Palestine and development efforts should remain high on the agenda. The United Nations will continue to focus, to the extent possible, on

institution-building and aligning its programmes to the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan.

88. In 2009, the United Nations will continue working towards the realization of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 1397 (2002), 1515 (2003), 1850 (2008) and 1860 (2009), and the establishment of a sovereign, democratic, viable and contiguous Palestinian State, existing side by side in peace with a secure Israel.

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**Strengthening of the coordination of  
humanitarian and disaster relief  
assistance of the United Nations,  
including special economic assistance**

**Economic and Social Council**  
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Item 9 of the provisional agenda\*\*  
**Implementation of the Declaration on the  
Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries  
and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the  
international institutions associated with the  
United Nations**

## Assistance to the Palestinian people

### Report of the Secretary-General

#### *Summary*

During the period under review, the Palestinian Authority issued its governmental programme outlining a forward-looking agenda to further strengthen the institutions of a future Palestinian State. Security and institutional reforms continued to be important elements to implement this agenda. The United Nations re-oriented its work to support Palestinian State-building efforts as a critical complement to the continued response to humanitarian needs.

The overall socio-economic and political situation remained challenging, despite notable economic growth in the West Bank prompted by Palestinian efforts and Israel's easing of closure. Intensive efforts by the international community did not result in the resumption of the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations or Palestinian unity. The political, administrative and economic rift continued to deepen between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Popular protests took place in the occupied Palestinian territory on a number of occasions. Donors disbursed approximately \$1.35 billion to finance the recurrent budget of the Palestinian Authority. In November 2009 the Government of Israel announced a partial restraint on construction in the West Bank settlements for 10 months, which, however, excluded East Jerusalem. In Gaza, the closure continued and contributed to de-development

\* A/65/50.

\*\* E/2010/100.



and the erosion of the private sector. Key elements of Security Council resolution 1860 (2009) remained unfulfilled. Despite recent positive steps to allow the entry of materials for some United Nations projects and a limited variety of goods for the private sector, Gaza's needs remain largely unmet.

The present report describes efforts made by the United Nations agencies, in cooperation with the Palestinian Authority, donors and civil society, to support the Palestinian population and institutions.

## I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted in compliance with General Assembly resolution 64/125, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it, at its sixty-fifth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution, containing an assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people, of the needs still unmet and of the specific proposals for responding effectively to them. The reporting period is from May 2009 to April 2010.

2. Information on the living and socio-economic conditions of the Palestinian people is the focus of several reports prepared by other United Nations agencies, in particular, (a) the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan (to be issued), and (b) the annual report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) (A/64/13).

3. The humanitarian, economic and development needs of the Palestinian people are reflected in three key documents of the Palestinian Authority: (a) the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan for 2008-2010, which outlines the priority development needs in the governance, social, economic and private sectors, and infrastructure development worth \$1.644 billion; (b) the Palestinian Authority's programme of the thirteenth Government, "Palestine: ending the occupation, establishing the State", which outlines the Government's two-year State-building strategy; and (c) "Palestine: moving forward, priority interventions for 2010", which is a bridging document between the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan and the next Palestinian National Plan, 2011-2013.

4. The United Nations assistance and support are outlined in three key documents. The consolidated appeals process for 2010, estimated at \$664 million, outlines the United Nations and partners' humanitarian programmes. The medium-term response plan for 2009 and 2010 outlines the United Nations contribution to the national development and State-building efforts of the Palestinians as defined in the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan. UNRWA programme goals for the period 2010-2015 were reflected in the Agency's medium-term strategy. Financial requirements for the strategy were estimated at \$675 million for 2010-2011, not including emergency relief interventions.

5. Throughout the year, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process continued to support United States and Quartet efforts for the resumption of negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. The Office continued to ensure effective and improved coordination of assistance among the United Nations country team, the Palestinian Authority, the international community and the Government of Israel. The Office also continued to document the economic and social conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory, and develop policies and programmes to improve them.

6. The present report provides an overview of the work of the United Nations, in cooperation with Palestinian, donor and civil society counterparts, to assist the Palestinian people and institutions, as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 64/125. Also included is a summary of key political developments and

challenges relevant to the reporting period, as the international community works to alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people, as well as to support the institution-building of the Palestinian Authority and the resumption of negotiations between the parties.

## **II. Overview of the current situation**

### **A. Political context**

7. On 4 June 2009, in his speech in Cairo, President Barack Obama of the United States of America reiterated the United States commitment to the two-State solution and called upon all players to live up to their responsibilities. On 14 June, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel endorsed the concept of a Palestinian State alongside Israel. On 26 June, the Quartet renewed its commitment to a two-State solution which would end the occupation that began in 1967 and called upon the parties to create the conditions for the prompt resumption and early conclusion of negotiations to resolve all permanent status issues, without preconditions. In this context, the Quartet called for the parties to implement their road map commitments. In an effort to further these objectives, Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Abbas met on 22 September 2009 in New York under the auspices of President Obama.

8. On 24 November 2009, the Government of Israel announced a partial restraint on construction in the West Bank settlements for 10 months, which, however, excluded East Jerusalem. This was a step beyond previous Israeli positions but fell short of Israel's road map obligations to freeze all settlement activity. President Abbas announced that he would not stand in future Palestinian elections and reiterated his call for an Israeli settlement freeze as a basis for the resumption of negotiations. There were tensions in East Jerusalem as a result of settlement activity, house demolitions and the actions of extremists on both sides related to holy sites in the Old City. In the rest of the West Bank, there was violence between Israeli security forces and Palestinians, settler-related violence and riots following the decision of the Israeli Government, in February 2010, to place the Tomb of the Patriarchs/Ibrahim Mosque and Rachel's Tomb/Bilal Mosque on a list of Israeli heritage sites. The Palestinian Authority has expressed concern about the additional Israeli military orders (Order Nos. 1649 and 1650) to prevent illegal infiltration in the West Bank, which were put in effect on 13 April 2010.

9. In the absence of progress to resume direct negotiations, in February 2010 the United States offered to facilitate indirect talks between the parties. On 3 March 2010, the League of Arab States Follow-up Committee on the Arab Peace Initiative gave its support to Palestinian participation in indirect negotiations. However, following the announcement of construction of an additional 1,600 housing units in East Jerusalem on 9 March, which coincided with the visit to Israel by Vice-President Joseph R. Biden Jr. of the United States, the launch of the proximity talks stalled. On 19 March, the Quartet met, outlined its support for resumed negotiations and reiterated its call for the parties to implement their road map commitments. The Secretary-General visited Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory on 20 and 21 March to assess the situation on the ground, especially in Gaza, and to urge the parties to resume negotiations.

10. The internal Palestinian divide continues. In the West Bank, the Palestinian Authority has pursued with considerable success a State-building agenda and made visible progress in security reform. In Gaza, Hamas maintained de facto control and has assumed responsibility for most of the Government activities and public services. Egyptian efforts to achieve Palestinian reconciliation have produced several areas of common ground, but Palestinians remain divided over a number of security and political issues, reflected in Hamas' refusal to sign a reconciliation document proposed by Egypt following several rounds of intra-Palestinian negotiations and despite its acceptance by factions of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

11. In accordance with the Basic Law, President Abbas decreed that presidential and legislative elections be held throughout the occupied Palestinian territory in January 2010. However, they were not held owing to Hamas' insistence on national reconciliation before elections could be held in Gaza. In February 2010 the Palestinian Authority asked the Central Elections Commission to make arrangements for municipal elections to be held in July 2010.

12. In Gaza, key elements of Security Council resolution 1860 (2009) remain unfulfilled, in particular a durable and sustainable ceasefire, intra-Palestinian reconciliation, opening of the crossings on the basis of the Agreement on Movement and Access between the Palestinian Authority and Israel of 2005, and the prevention of illicit trafficking in arms and ammunition. Hamas has increased its control over the population and the majority of institutions. Since January 2009, a de facto and uneasy calm has broadly been maintained between Gaza and Israel, but incidents of rocket fire and violence have continued. There has been little reconstruction of the destroyed civilian infrastructure and damage caused by Israel's military operation "Cast Lead" owing to the continued Israeli closure on a wide range of goods entering Gaza, especially construction materials.

13. The humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip remains a priority for the United Nations, and the Secretary-General, who visited Gaza on 21 March, is personally engaged. His persistent efforts prompted Israel to allow the entry of glass, aluminium and wood, which made possible partial repair of houses with windows damaged during operation "Cast Lead", as well as construction materials for the United Nations projects on housing units in Khan Younis, a flour mill in El Bader and a sewage treatment facility in Tel el-Sultan.

14. Most goods now enter Gaza through tunnels between Gaza and Egypt, contributing to an underground economy regulated and controlled by Hamas and affiliated businessmen. Despite extensive mediation efforts and the provision of a "sign of life" in October 2009, a deal to secure the release of Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit and Palestinian prisoners has not been achieved. Egypt continues to make efforts to combat smuggling and began in recent months to install underground metal sheeting along its border with Gaza. Concerns remain about the smuggling of weapons, including rockets.

## **B. Humanitarian and socio-economic context**

### **Economic and fiscal developments**

15. Real growth of the gross domestic product was estimated at 6.8 per cent for 2009, consisting of 8.5 per cent growth in the West Bank and 1 per cent growth in Gaza. Consumer price inflation fell from 7 per cent at the end of 2008 to around 4 per cent at the end of 2009. Growth in the West Bank was aided by the recovery of private sector confidence through the Palestinian Authority's reforms, especially in public finance and security areas. The partial easing of movement restrictions in the West Bank also contributed to this growth.

16. Despite improved economic growth, the 2009 unemployment rate in the West Bank and Gaza was 25 per cent. While there was no significant decline in the West Bank's unemployment rate in the first half of the year compared to the same period in 2008, it declined from around 20 per cent to 18 per cent in the second half of 2009. In Gaza the unemployment rate remained virtually unchanged at around 39 per cent, reflecting the lack of economic activity.<sup>1</sup>

17. The Government of Prime Minister Fayyad has continued with reforms in fiscal and monetary policy. The Palestine Monetary Authority has built upon progress achieved in 2007-2008 and moved closer to its medium-term objective of becoming a central bank. A strict Government employment policy has been followed and measures have been implemented to improve payment of utility bills. The Public Finance Management System has been strengthened further, which is helping to prioritize and raise the quality of spending. The wage bill of civil servants was also brought in line, while net lending, consisting largely of utility subsidies, was lower than budgeted owing to strict measures to improve payment of utility bills.

18. Economic activity in Gaza remained severely constrained by the persisting closure and resultant restrictions on capital inputs, raw materials and building supplies. This has led to a degradation in living conditions, impeded post-conflict private sector recovery and reconstruction efforts, and continues to fuel a process of de-development. As noted in paragraph 14 above, this has also led to a proliferation of tunnels, with an estimated 1,000 tunnels in operation at the end of the reporting period. The tunnels allow for the regular supply of many goods otherwise unavailable, including food, livestock, electrical appliances, furniture and fuel. Most of them are sold at lower prices and are of lower quality than those previously imported from Israel.

### **Humanitarian and socio-economic developments**

19. Since the last reporting period,<sup>2</sup> 57 Palestinians were killed (45 in Gaza, 12 in the West Bank) and 1,058 were injured (156 in Gaza, 902 in the West Bank) by Israeli security forces, a significant decrease compared to the previous 12 months, when 1,505 fatalities and 6,923 injuries were recorded.<sup>3</sup> This difference is largely

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<sup>1</sup> International Monetary Fund, "Macroeconomic and fiscal framework for the West Bank and Gaza: fifth review of progress". Staff report for the meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, Madrid, 13 April 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Figures cover the period from 1 May 2009 to 13 April 2010.

<sup>3</sup> The figures are different from those reported in 2009; as at the time of publishing the 2009 report, organizations were still counting the number of civilians affected by operation "Cast Lead".



attributable to the Israeli military operation in Gaza in December 2008 and January 2009, during which 1,440 Palestinians were killed and 5,380 were injured. In addition, 44 Palestinians were killed and 70 were injured in internal fighting in Gaza only during the reporting period. Five Israelis were killed and 184 were injured during the reporting period, compared to 12 Israelis killed and 192 injured during the previous reporting period. Militants launched 91 rockets and mortar shells towards communities in Israel in the reporting period, as compared to over 2,000 in the previous period.

20. High levels of unemployment, food insecurity and aid dependency persisted, especially in Gaza and area C of the West Bank. While the basic daily food and humanitarian essentials were generally provided, the aid community was unable to respond effectively to the broader needs within the Gaza Strip owing to the ongoing closure. In the West Bank, movement and access obstacles, and a restrictive planning and related permitting process in area C, often prevented communities and humanitarian agencies from implementing humanitarian and development programmes. In addition, many communities in area C continued to be threatened by house demolitions and displacement. During the first quarter of 2010, 24 Palestinian-owned structures were demolished in area C, compared to 9 structures in the first quarter of 2009; thousands of other structures have pending demolition orders. The continued threat of demolitions is one of the factors creating high levels of tension in the West Bank, especially in East Jerusalem.

#### **Movement, humanitarian access and operational space**

21. The Israeli authorities continued to adopt measures to ease the movement of Palestinians between most Palestinian urban centres in the West Bank, excluding East Jerusalem. Currently, there are approximately 550 closure obstacles inside the West Bank, 80 fewer than at the beginning of the reporting period.<sup>4</sup> The Tarkumiya crossing opening hours for commercial goods were extended by three hours and tourist buses are allowed to move through the Jalameh vehicle crossing into the West Bank. The positive impact of these measures, however, has been offset in part by a steep increase in ad hoc “flying” checkpoints since December 2009 (the monthly average from October 2009 to January 2010 was 371, compared to 278 during the same period in the previous year). In addition to area C restrictions, access by Palestinians to and from areas behind the barrier, including East Jerusalem, and the Jordan Valley, as well as within the Israeli-controlled area of Hebron City, continued to be severely restricted.

22. In Gaza the closure contributed to the inability of the civilian population to engage in a meaningful recovery over a year since the conclusion of Israeli military operation “Cast Lead”. While the approval of a number of key projects, as mentioned in paragraph 13 above, represents a positive first step, this falls short of the type of systemic change that will allow Gazans to begin to rebuild their lives. The majority of items allowed into Gaza from Israel through the official crossings continued to be food and hygiene items (85 per cent of imports since October 2009)

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<sup>4</sup> They include 69 permanently staffed checkpoints, of which 37 are located along the barrier and used to allow Israelis to commute between Israel and the settlements, to allow access of limited numbers of Palestinians holding special permits to East Jerusalem and to Israel, and to allow access to and from small Palestinian communities isolated by the barrier.

in addition to some medical goods and educational material.<sup>5</sup> Medical referrals for Gaza's residents for external treatment continued to require permits issued by the Israeli authorities. In 2009 30 per cent of applications were delayed and 2 per cent were rejected (in 2008, 37 per cent of applications were delayed and 3 per cent were rejected).

23. The Erez crossing point, the only passage for movement of people between Gaza and the West Bank via Israel, remained open to the majority of requests for the transit of humanitarian staff, with approximately 1,300 crossings every month. Except for bulk items through the Karni crossing conveyor belt, all goods destined for Gaza are transferred through the Kerem Shalom crossing. Problems resulting from the lack of capacity to transfer cooking gas resulted in shortages during the winter months, while a range of operational challenges, including reduced amounts of fuel entering Gaza, meant increasing periods of blackouts for Gaza City. The increased capacity of the tunnels led to greater amounts of benzene and reconstruction items to be transferred to Gaza. Nahal Oz was closed for the transfer of fuel as from 1 January 2010 except for one shipment in mid-January 2010; all fuel transfers have since occurred at Kerem Shalom.

24. Access and operational space for staff of humanitarian agencies remained restricted. From May 2009 to the end of January 2010, there were 526 reported incidents of delayed or denied access of United Nations staff at Israeli checkpoints, resulting in the loss of 4,687 staff hours, or 625 days. The majority of these incidents occur as United Nations staff cross the barrier on the Jerusalem periphery.

25. International and national non-governmental organizations in Gaza were subjected to pressure from the Hamas authorities, including requests to re-register, to provide staff lists and to share confidential financial data and beneficiary lists. In some cases, national non-governmental organizations were forced to close or have come under the direct control of the Hamas authorities.

26. In response to these challenges, a unit within the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat was created to address, on behalf of the Humanitarian Coordinator, these issues and to support the operations of the United Nations and international non-governmental organizations throughout the occupied Palestinian territory.

### **Barrier**

27. Barrier construction within the occupied Palestinian territory continued despite the advisory opinion rendered by the International Court of Justice in July 2004. As of July 2009, 58.3 per cent (413 km) of the planned barrier of 709 km had been completed and 72 km of the barrier were under construction. The pace of construction has slowed. The United Nations Register of Damage Caused by the Construction of the Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, established pursuant to resolution ES-10/17, continued its outreach and claim intake activities, and completed its work in Jenin and Tubas governorates. Over 5,000 claim forms for registration of damages and 50,000 supporting documents were collected. Of continuing concern is limited access on the part of farmers to agricultural land

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<sup>5</sup> Sales of goods are unregulated and items like medicine and live animals pose a threat to public health, including in Israel.

behind the barrier and the situation of those communities in the “seam zone” that face restricted access to health and education services.

### **III. United Nations response**

28. The United Nations system continued to pursue an integrated political, humanitarian, recovery and development strategy. It continued to promote a negotiated permanent status agreement for a two-State solution, a durable Israeli-Palestinian peace and the implementation of road map obligations by the parties. The United Nations continued planning and implementing extensive humanitarian programmes, in particular in Gaza, and strengthened its support to Palestinian State-building efforts, making this an explicit goal of its policies and programming.

#### **A. Human and social development**

29. Humanitarian assistance was delivered throughout the occupied Palestinian territory. At the same time, the United Nations continued to implement programmes aimed at strengthening national institutions, systems and capacities for long-term social and economic development and self-reliance, and supported national efforts towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. This was done by providing technical assistance, advocacy, service delivery and partnership facilitation.

##### **Education**

30. UNRWA provided free school education to over 260,000 pupils in 325 elementary and preparatory schools in Gaza and the West Bank. Two thirds of these schools still operate on a double-shift system, including 90 per cent of UNRWA schools in Gaza. Consequently, children receive fewer hours of instruction and lack adequate access to teachers and facilities. In the West Bank, access restrictions are also hindering access to education, in particular for seam zone and area C residents.

31. UNRWA launched an education recovery plan in the West Bank, focused on reforms in curricula, teaching methods and remedial education. It included a tertiary education reform initiative aimed at promoting youth development and poverty alleviation. In Gaza, UNRWA began to implement a strategy to provide practical help to some 40,000 children with special needs in Agency schools. For the third year in a row, in Gaza, UNRWA implemented a six-week summer learning programme. Of the 39,600 students who participated, 62 per cent achieved basic numeracy and literacy for their level and were able to advance a grade.

32. The work of over 300 counsellors in UNRWA schools, health and social service centres, and community-based organizations, hired and trained through the community mental health programme, continued during 2009. The programme seeks to support refugee household coping mechanisms by addressing the psychosocial distress, emotional disturbance and behavioural cases caused to refugees by the prevailing violence and economic hardship.

33. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) contributed to the establishment of the Commission for Developing the Teaching Profession, which plays a key role in implementing the teacher education

strategy. UNESCO provides technical assistance to the Commission, as it sets and reviews national professional standards for teachers. It also supported the formulation of a framework for capacity development in educational planning and management aimed at enhancing the institutional planning and management capacity of the Palestinian Authority's Ministry of Education and Higher Education. The World Bank's tertiary education project is contributing to improving the regulatory environment for the management, relevance and quality assurance of tertiary education.

34. The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education continued their strategic partnership through the second phase of the women-run school canteen project launched in October 2009. The project will improve school health and nutrition of approximately 85,000 students by involving and supporting 28 women's centres and women's community-based organizations in the running of school canteens over the course of three years. A total of 230 school canteens and related income-generating initiatives will be created as sustainable economic enterprises.

35. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) worked with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education to outline an early child development policy that will significantly expand access to preschool opportunities. UNICEF developed child-friendly kits, including educational toys and games, 200 of which were distributed to kindergartens across the occupied Palestinian territory. It is also working with the Ministry on legislation related to eliminating violence in schools. A draft policy and guidelines were piloted in 93 schools run by the Palestinian Authority, private entities and UNRWA in Gaza and Jerusalem in 2009. The draft policy will be finalized on the basis of lessons learned during the pilot, with the goal of extending it to all schools in 2010.

36. Under the Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 18 schools benefited from microgrants to improve the quality of education. The Terra Santa kindergarten in Jericho was inaugurated and three schools, in Nablus, Ramallah and Qabatia, were furnished and equipped. Moreover, UNDP constructed additional classrooms in 33 West Bank schools.

## **Health**

37. UNRWA operated 56 health facilities in Gaza and the West Bank, employing over 2,000 staff. The total number of patient consultations in Gaza was 4,070,360, a 5.4 per cent increase compared to 2008. In the West Bank, consultations rose 5 per cent, to 2,020,442, in comparison to 2008. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) continued to provide technical and financial support to four women's health centres in Hebron, and Jabalia and Al Buraj refugee camps located in Gaza. UNFPA efforts to prevent hospital-acquired infections continued in 2009 and infection control committees were activated in all maternity wards in the West Bank. Training in infection control and standard precautions continued in Gaza and, in cooperation with the Directorate of Hospitals, UNFPA completed the training in emergency obstetric care protocols for all Ministry of Health maternity workers in the West Bank and in two maternity wards in Gaza.

38. UNICEF contributed towards sustaining immunization coverage, targeting 120,000 infants with diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus (DPT3-Hib) vaccines (97 per

cent coverage), and reaching over 51,000 pregnant women with two doses of tetanus toxoid. The polio, measles and tetanus elimination targets and goals have been maintained with zero reported cases over the past five years. With UNICEF interventions towards improving community and family health-care practices, 228 health-care providers in Gaza and the West Bank were trained in integrated management of childhood illnesses, which is a life-saving, holistic approach to caring for sick children. Micronutrient supplementation was provided to 651 maternal and child health clinics across the occupied Palestinian territory, together with basic growth monitoring and laboratory micronutrient measuring equipment.

39. The World Health Organization (WHO) provided a range of capacity-building and training programmes for the Ministry of Health, and supported the planning and policy capacities of the Ministry's Health Policy and Planning Unit, including in the production and updating of the National Strategic Health Plan. WHO worked with the Ministry to develop a strategy for the prevention, early detection and control of non-communicable diseases, and is supporting the implementation of a longer-term programme for reform of mental health services from an institutional to a community-based model. In addition, WHO assisted the Ministry to prepare the national pandemic preparedness and response plan and the national H1N1 2009 vaccine deployment plan.

40. UNDP, WHO, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, UNFPA, UNRWA and UNICEF continued to implement programmes under the Global Fund to Combat HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. Activities included training of health-service providers in sexually transmitted infections, syndromic case management, advanced HIV care and treatment at antiretroviral therapy sites, and provision of antiretroviral therapy combination therapy, diagnosis, treatment and counselling at health facilities.

41. UNDP started construction works to enlarge two Government hospitals in the West Bank cities of Jenin and Tulkarem, and procured three ambulances to service rural communities. In addition, it constructed three new community mental health centres in the towns of Jenin, Nablus and Halhoul, as well as a documentation centre in El Bireh. Training of mental health practitioners in primary health-care clinics was undertaken for the centres and equipment and furniture were purchased.

### **Employment**

42. The International Labour Organization (ILO) supported the Ministry of Labour in formulating a national labour strategy and contributed towards improved access to labour market information. ILO also worked with the Palestinian Authority in the development of an integrated national policy to promote small- and medium-sized enterprise development, and establishment and operationalization of a legal clinic at the Palestine General Federation of Trade Unions to provide legal advice and services to Palestinian workers employed in Israel. In addition, ILO contributed to efforts to develop the capacities of the Federation of Palestinian Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture to become a stronger advocate of employers' organizations and a more efficient private sector representative in the occupied Palestinian territory.

### **Targeted social assistance**

43. The World Bank is implementing a project to improve the living conditions of the poorest and most vulnerable households, and strengthen the institutional capacity of the Ministry of Social Affairs in managing cash transfer programmes. UNRWA distributed 513,314 food parcels and \$1.4 million in supplementary cash assistance to nearly 31,400 households through its special hardship case programme. In addition, the UNRWA poverty-based targeting instrument, tested in Gaza in 2008, was expanded to the West Bank. On the basis of the results of this survey, a family income supplement to bridge the abject poverty gap was provided for 10,125 individuals in the West Bank and 69,590 individuals in Gaza. A total of \$10.5 million was distributed through this programme.

### **Culture**

44. UNESCO supported the preparation of the first sector strategy for culture within the framework of the culture and development Millennium Development Goal joint programme in the occupied Palestinian territory. UNESCO supported efforts to rehabilitate and adapt the reuse of Khan al-Wakala in the Old City of Nablus, to establish the Riwaya Museum in Bethlehem and to draft the Battir landscape conservation and management plan and its guidelines in Bethlehem.

### **Food security and agriculture**

45. The programmes of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) improved the livelihoods of over 12,900 persons in the West Bank and Gaza through interventions aimed at mitigating the effects of rural poverty and food insecurity, water scarcity, lack of access to agricultural areas and inputs, and high cost of production through the delivery of inputs and technical support. Projects include backyard food production, promotion of aquaculture, home gardening and food processing to generate income, with focus on female-headed households. In addition, FAO implemented programmes to reclaim and rehabilitate destroyed lands to restart food production and provide nutritious food for the market in Gaza. In response to operation "Cast Lead", FAO implemented programmes to assist the most vulnerable farmers and rural households to restore farming-based livelihoods, boost local food production, strengthen the wider economy and improve coordination within the agricultural sector.

46. UNDP is implementing several projects in Gaza and the West Bank, including a comprehensive emergency response programme for rehabilitation of agricultural lands, irrigation infrastructure, the fishery sector and livestock production in the Gaza Strip. The UNDP agricultural development programme also includes a major land reclamation and irrigation infrastructure rehabilitation component in the West Bank which has benefited approximately 2,700 rural households dependent on the agricultural sector. UNIFEM supported the training of 272 women from 10 rural women's community-based organizations in the Hebron and Qalqilya districts in food processing and management. There are currently nine operational production units which have started generating income for their participants.

### **Human rights, women, children and youth**

47. Acting under the umbrella of the Ministry of Social Affairs, UNIFEM continued to support the Mehwar Centre, which hosted and protected a monthly

average of 30 women and their children from violence and honour killings. UNIFEM also supported the development of a national strategy to combat violence against women and is working with the Ministry of Women's Affairs to develop the cross-sectoral national gender strategy.

48. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) trained 30 police officers in the provision of child-friendly services, 15 Palestinian judges in international human rights standards and their application, and 21 staff of the Independent Commission for Human Rights in monitoring and reporting human rights violations. In collaboration with the Palestinian High Judicial Council and the Judicial Training Institute of Jordan, OHCHR held a three-day seminar for 15 new Palestinian judges in Jordan on the role of the judiciary in protecting and promoting human rights.

49. In Gaza, UNRWA continued to teach a stand-alone human rights curriculum based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and identified and trained over 200 human rights teachers. In addition, UNRWA worked with the International Committee of the Red Cross, OHCHR and local human rights organizations in curriculum development. Human rights also formed part of the UNRWA curriculum in the West Bank.

50. UNFPA continued to support its national partner's efforts to improve the protection of women and girls from gender-based violence by providing outreach psychosocial support through trained social workers in Nablus, Jenin and Jericho municipalities so as to detect, counsel and refer cases. With ILO facilitation, the National Women's Employment Committee was established. This Committee will serve as an advisory group, promoting women's employment activities, providing protection in the workplace and integrating women's employment within existing strategies for gender-responsive employment opportunities. WHO planned and implemented the first of a series of workshops for the Ministry of Health on health and law, with special attention to difficulties in accessing East Jerusalem hospitals.

51. UNICEF worked with the Ministry of Youth and Sports to develop a database of youth services and trained 122 Ministry staff in all districts. UNDP developed a pilot project for a Palestinian Youth Sports League, which is a community-based national sports programme designed to provide youth, adolescents and children with a safe and competitive sporting environment. The League, to be launched in April 2010, aims to promote positive role models among young Palestinians and to encourage social and corporate responsibility in the community. The FAO Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools project was implemented in 26 schools throughout the West Bank and Gaza, benefiting 1,200 boys and girls by using agriculture as a backdrop for life lessons.

### **Environment**

52. The World Bank is addressing immediate and impending health, environmental and safety hazards to communities in the Beit Lahia area of northern Gaza. The goal is to find a long-term solution for the adequate treatment and disposal of wastewater in northern Gaza, which entails construction of a new wastewater treatment facility. Approximately 300,000 people living in northern Gaza will benefit from this project.

53. The World Bank is contributing to the development of a sustainable institutional structure of the water and wastewater sector in Gaza, including through strengthening the regulatory and institutional capacity of the Palestinian Water Authority. UNRWA continued to provide essential support to those delivering basic utility services in Gaza, such as water, sewage pumping and solid waste collection and disposal. UNDP is supporting the capacity-building of relevant ministries and civil society organizations to adapt to climate change challenges in the short and long term and to integrate climate change coping mechanisms in the National Development Plan.

54. The ongoing Southern West Bank Solid Waste Management Project of the World Bank, which will benefit approximately 600,000 people in Bethlehem and Hebron governorates, will provide an efficient, socially acceptable and environmentally friendly mechanism for the improvement of solid waste management. The project will also build the capacity of the Joint Services Council and the Environmental Quality Authority.

55. The United Nations Environment Programme undertook a post-conflict environmental assessment to examine the natural and environmental impacts on the Gaza Strip caused by operation “Cast Lead”, and an economic evaluation of the cost of environmental rehabilitation and restoration.<sup>6</sup> Discussions are ongoing on the implementation of the recommendations.

## **B. United Nations system emergency assistance**

56. Through the consolidated appeals process for 2009, an appeal was made for \$803 million, which was 75.8 per cent funded. The Humanitarian Response Fund was used to fill urgent funding gaps and respond to unforeseen humanitarian needs in Gaza and the West Bank, especially in area C and the seam zone.

### **Emergency construction**

57. UNDP and UNRWA succeeded in clearing more than 293,000 tons of rubble from more than 1,000 sites and crushed 150,330 tons of rubble. Crushed rubble is currently being reused in small-scale infrastructure projects, such as road rehabilitation. The operation is expected to be completed in December 2010.

58. The United Nations Mine Action Team explosive ordnance removal teams assessed 1,632 sites (882,571m<sup>2</sup>) in preparation for rubble removal and rehabilitation of road projects. Support for explosive ordnance disposal by the mine action team uncovered 343 items of unexploded ordnance, of which 171 were found during rubble removal activities.

59. The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) started the construction of buildings and infrastructure works for the first phase of King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz City for Charity Housing in Hebron. The project aims to improve the living conditions of poor women and their families by constructing 100 housing units and establishing small-scale enterprise activities to generate income for poor female-headed households in Hebron.

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<sup>6</sup> United Nations Environment Programme, *Environmental assessment of the Gaza Strip following the escalation of hostilities in December 2008-January 2009*.



### **Emergency income generation**

60. UNRWA provided temporary employment for around 77,000 persons in Gaza and the West Bank, creating over 3.5 million days of employment, equivalent to almost 15,000 full-time jobs. UNDP is implementing a programme for 50,000 people that provides emergency livelihood support, utilizing emergency job creation schemes in such areas as solid waste management, agriculture and fishery. In addition, the UNDP Deprived Families Economic Empowerment Programme provided income-generation activities for 723 families in Gaza.

### **Emergency food and agriculture support**

61. The World Food Programme (WFP) interventions reached 395,000 vulnerable and food-insecure non-refugee Palestinians in the West Bank and 377,000 in Gaza. Over 68,300 metric tons of food commodities were distributed (37,000 in Gaza, 31,300 in the West Bank). In Gaza 92,000 schoolchildren were provided with school snacks and, in the West Bank, this programme reached 63,000 children in primary schools and kindergartens.

62. WFP launched an urban voucher project in the West Bank which assisted 5,500 vulnerable urban households affected by high food prices. The project provided a financial stimulus to the local economy, as the vouchers are redeemed in shops against locally produced commodities. WFP launched the voucher project in Gaza in November for 2,300 urban households and implemented a joint assistance programme with UNRWA for 36,000 vulnerable Bedouin communities in area C. FAO supported an estimated 2,500 poor herder families with emergency assistance in the same communities.

63. UNRWA increased its emergency food aid rolls in Gaza from 550,000 to 900,000 refugees. However, from the end of March 2009, the Agency reduced its emergency food aid caseload in Gaza to approximately 650,000 refugees. UNDP and UNRWA provided financial support to thousands of families whose homes were destroyed or sustained damage during operation "Cast Lead".<sup>7</sup> Both agencies are providing \$5,000 to families whose shelters were completely destroyed and \$3,000 for those that suffered major damage and are compensating the value of actual repairs of houses that sustained minor damages.

64. In the West Bank, UNRWA provided emergency food aid to around 60,000 families. Special focus was placed on communities affected by the barrier and living in area C, as well as those in East Jerusalem, which continued to face the risk of internal displacement. UNRWA provided \$54,646 as cash assistance to address the immediate material needs of 32 refugee families affected by forcible evictions, home demolitions and other damages to private property caused by hostilities and violence.

### **Emergency health support**

65. WHO, with health cluster partners, carried out assessments of health needs in Gaza in February and July 2009, and supplied medicines, disposables and

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<sup>7</sup> According to assessments conducted by UNDP and UNRWA, 2,202 refugee shelters and 1,223 non-refugee shelters were completely destroyed during the war, while a further 1,689 refugee shelters and 1,154 non-refugee shelters sustained major damage and 43,996 refugee shelters and 10,804 non-refugee shelters sustained minor damage.

equipment, and logistical support to the central drug stores and support departments in the main Gaza hospitals. WHO is implementing a project to improve the quality of maternal and newborn health care in Gaza, initially targeting the main hospital facilities. The project is expected to raise standards of care and improve related health outcomes, such as infant mortality and morbidity, reducing disabilities, obstetric complications and maternal mortality.

66. With the Ministry of Health and UNRWA, UNICEF conducted a catch-up measles, mumps and rubella campaign that reached 117,000 students in grades 7 and 9 who had been missed in earlier rounds. UNICEF established four therapeutic feeding centres for moderate to severely malnourished children and provided micronutrient supplies for six months.

#### **Emergency water and sanitation support**

67. UNICEF provided tankered water to 135 schools and 8 learning centres, benefiting at least 112,500 students and 5,000 teachers. One well was drilled in Al Moghraqa, making available safe water to approximately 40,000 residents, while rehabilitation and extension of water networks increased access for an additional 30,000 residents in northern Gaza. Six small desalination units have been installed near wells across Gaza, benefiting 30,000 people, and two large desalination units currently being installed will reach 20,000 more residents. Throughout the West Bank, water and sanitation facilities were renovated in 23 marginalized schools, benefiting over 8,000 students and around 200 teachers.

### **C. United Nations system support to Palestinian institutions**

68. Under the leadership of the Ministry of Social Affairs, UNICEF facilitated negotiations related to 28 child protection-focused amendments to the Child Law of 2004. The amended Law was approved by the Council of Ministers in 2009 and awaits the President's endorsement. Working with the Ministry of Finance, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) introduced the automated system for customs data project. The system, which is now being used in all customs offices in the West Bank, will simplify customs procedures and facilitate trade through online processing, making it faster and cheaper for Palestinian exporters and importers to conduct transactions.

69. The World Bank's Palestinian non-governmental organization project has already successfully increased the capacity of Palestinian non-governmental organizations to carry out social service delivery activities. In its third phase the project has supported the transformation of the Project Management Organization, the implementing unit within the Welfare Association of the previous projects, into the Non-Governmental Organization Development Centre, an institution dedicated to grant-making and sector development. At the same time, the project will provide funding to develop and sustain specific social service delivery activities sponsored by non-governmental organizations.

70. The World Bank is supporting the Palestinian Authority's implementation of the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan by strengthening the Authority's fiscal position and improving public financial management. The World Bank's municipal development programme is supporting municipalities in their capital investment and services positions, and supported municipal innovations and

efficiency by promoting amalgamation, energy savings and responsiveness to citizens. In addition, the World Bank is supporting small communities in planning local initiatives and prioritizing needs through an inclusive and participatory process by providing small grants to support joint activities among several village councils for subprojects that were part of the local plan.

71. UNDP continued to support the capacity development of the High Judicial Council and the Attorney-General's Office as well as institutional development of the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministries of Planning and Administrative Development, Foreign Affairs and National Economy, and the General Personnel Council. The UNDP multi-year comprehensive programme, "supporting the rule of law and access to justice for the Palestinian people 2009-2012", approved in 2009, aims to implement interventions to strengthen the institutional capacity of the Palestinian justice system and improve access to justice.

72. The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) provided support, mainly through the Ministry of the Interior, to the Palestinian civil police, civil defence and presidential guard, and built capacity in project development within the civil police by continuing the Programme Steering Committee. UNOPS also supervised the design and construction of three major infrastructure projects in the West Bank.

73. The World Bank is providing funding for infrastructure rehabilitation and maintenance to help mitigate further deterioration in the delivery of essential municipal services and created an estimated 237,181 direct temporary employment opportunities and 36,325 indirect temporary employment opportunities. In addition, it is supporting the adoption of appropriate sectoral efficiency enhancement measures and the key performance indicators of electricity distribution utilities, including improved collection performance.

74. In 2009 UNRWA signed a memorandum of understanding with the Palestinian Monetary Authority for its microfinance department to join the new national credit registry. UNRWA participation in the registry accounts for 10 per cent to 13 per cent of all new credit facilities opened each month by 20 commercial banks and three microfinance institutions with branches in the occupied Palestinian territory, although its loans account for less than 2 per cent of the value of credits.

#### **D. Private sector development**

75. UNCTAD support for the Palestinian private sector involved provision of advisory services to the Palestinian Shippers' Council ([www.psc.ps](http://www.psc.ps)) to assist it in launching new services to its members and the Palestinian community of importers and exporters at large. UNRWA financed 12,000 loans valued at \$19.73 million for Palestinian microenterprises and households. While the West Bank portfolio grew by 20 per cent (9,500 loans valued at \$16.06 million), credit outreach in Gaza shrunk to 2,400 loans valued at just \$3.67 million owing to the closure. Despite the situation in Gaza, UNRWA was able to cover 126 per cent of its running costs of \$3.69 million from its credit operations.

76. The World Bank co-funded grants to more than 200 Palestinian businesses in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and in Gaza valued at \$3 million. The grants aim at assisting enterprises to expand into new markets locally, regionally

and internationally, encouraging firms to develop new and improved products, promote first-time exporters, build the local market for business development services and gather data on local obstacles to growth.

## **E. Coordination of United Nations assistance**

77. Efforts to streamline United Nations coordination mechanisms continued throughout the reporting period, with regular structured meetings of the United Nations country team and of strategic area groups established under the United Nations medium-term response plan. This enabled a more focused engagement with external coordination mechanisms, such as the local aid coordination structure comprising the Palestinian Authority, donors, United Nations agencies and civil society; the humanitarian country team; and the Office of the Quartet Representative. Streamlining United Nations coordination has helped to ensure that the operational work of the Organization reinforces its higher-level policy positions and interventions.

78. The humanitarian country team met regularly to address pertinent humanitarian issues and to agree on advocacy messages and response. In Gaza, the Operational Coordination Group and the humanitarian cluster/sector working groups continued to coordinate humanitarian assistance provided by the United Nations and international agencies.

## **IV. Donor response to the crisis**

### **Budgetary and fiscal support**

79. In 2009 donors provided around \$1.3 billion towards direct budget support.<sup>8</sup> The budgetary external financing requirements for 2010 are projected at \$1.2 billion, down from \$1.35 billion in 2009 and from \$1.8 billion in 2008, reflecting what Prime Minister Fayyad has termed as an effort to secure reduced reliance on the international community. However, in January 2010 approximately \$50 million only was received and approximately \$60 million only in February 2010. Without adequate and timely donor assistance, the Palestinian Authority is likely to face serious liquidity difficulties. Predictability in funding is essential to allow the Authority to plan accordingly so as to ensure adequate financing in 2010.

### **Donor coordination**

80. The humanitarian donor group met regularly and the group, in turn, met on a regular basis with the humanitarian country team to discuss and coordinate key humanitarian policy issues. In addition, the biweekly meetings, co-chaired by the European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, provided an opportunity for the humanitarian community to share information with donors about the latest humanitarian trends and updates on

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<sup>8</sup> The biggest contributors include the United States of America (\$3 million), Saudi Arabia (\$2 million), EU through the PEGASE mechanism (mécanisme palestinien-européen de gestion de l'aide socio-économique) (\$4 million), the United Arab Emirates (\$2 million) and contributors to the World Bank's Trust Fund (a total of \$1 million).

the political situation to ensure partners reflect the priorities and concerns of humanitarian actors in their dealings with the relevant Israeli and Palestinian authorities, and support a common approach within the international community.

81. Two meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee were held. The Joint Liaison Committee, a tripartite coordination mechanism including the Government of Israel, the Palestinian Authority and representatives of the international community, was revitalized at the local level to monitor progress towards agreed areas.

82. In close collaboration with the Palestinian Authority and UNDP, the Office of the Special Coordinator initiated and organized a series of workshops and training sessions on aid effectiveness for the Palestinian Authority, donors, civil society and the United Nations country team to build wider knowledge of and familiarity with the principles enumerated in the Paris Declaration, and to use those principles to strengthen the delivery of development assistance.

## **V. Unmet needs**

83. The 2010 consolidated appeals process calls for \$664.4 million for 236 humanitarian and early recovery projects in the areas of food security, agriculture, protection, education, health, water and sanitation, and coordination and support services. As of 20 April, funding stood at 19.4 per cent.

84. In January, the Palestinian Authority released the priority interventions document for 2010, entitled "Palestine: moving forward, priority interventions for 2010", which is organized around four principles: building local Government institutions; upgrading public service delivery; establishing strategically significant infrastructure; and improving foreign relations of the Palestinian Authority. Of the total budget of approximately \$5.5 billion, 51 per cent of the priority projects in the document are not yet funded. In addition to supporting the projects identified in the document, the United Nations will continue to implement capacity development programmes and projects in key priority sectors, in particular water and sanitation, education, shelter and reconstruction, in both the West Bank and Gaza. In its support for these activities, the United Nations has agreed with the Palestinian Authority to the establishment of a trust fund to support the United Nations work.

## **VI. Challenges**

85. The closure of the Gaza Strip continued, despite recent approval of a broader range of goods to enter the Strip, as mentioned earlier in the present report. In the West Bank, despite the easing of some obstacles, movement and access continued to be restricted, and settlement expansion and house demolitions continued, as did restrictive planning and permit processes in area C. As affirmed by the Quartet in Moscow on 19 March 2010, a durable solution is required to the issues of security, Palestinian unity and crossings in accordance with the Agreement on Movement and Access of 2005. There was also a lack of progress in Israeli-Palestinian negotiations and Palestinian reconciliation efforts. These factors have impacted the development of the Palestinian economy as well as the delivery of international assistance.

## VII. Conclusions

86. The operational context for the United Nations in the reporting period led to the re-orientation of its work to support Palestinian State-building efforts as a critical complement to the continued response to humanitarian needs. Humanitarian and development efforts are an essential component of the creation of a Palestinian State as part of the two-State solution, but are no substitute for the progress which must also be made on the political track. The United Nations will continue working towards the realization of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 1397 (2002), 1515 (2003), 1850 (2008) and 1860 (2009), an end to the occupation that began in 1967 and the establishment of a sovereign, democratic, viable and contiguous Palestinian State, existing side by side in peace with a secure Israel.

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# General Assembly Economic and Social Council

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Strengthening of the coordination of  
humanitarian and disaster relief assistance  
of the United Nations, including special  
economic assistance**

**Economic and Social Council  
Substantive session of 2011  
Geneva, 4-29 July 2011  
Item 9 of the provisional agenda\*\*  
Implementation of the Declaration  
on the Granting of Independence to  
Colonial Countries and Peoples by  
the specialized agencies and the  
international institutions associated  
with the United Nations**

## Assistance to the Palestinian people

### Report of the Secretary-General

#### *Summary*

During the period under review, the Palestinian Authority continued to implement its two-year programme of strengthening the State institutions of a future Palestinian State. The United Nations enhanced its support to those efforts and responded to humanitarian needs. In the key areas of United Nations engagement, the functions of the Palestinian Authority are sufficient for a functioning State government. However, those achievements remain constrained by the continued occupation by Israel and a political divide with Gaza.

The overall socio-economic and political situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory remained challenging, despite economic growth registered across the Territory, which was prompted by Palestinian and Israeli efforts. The Israeli-Palestinian direct talks, despite a brief resumption in September 2010, remained suspended during most of the reporting period. Calls for legislative and presidential elections, which had been postponed in 2010, also remained uncertain due to a continued political split between the West Bank and Gaza, although municipal elections have been set for July 2011. Unemployment and food insecurity remained high, particularly in Gaza, despite economic growth there resulting in part from the easing of the closure and from approval of a number of United Nations reconstruction projects. Key elements of Security Council resolution 1860 (2009) remained unfulfilled.

\* A/66/50.

\*\* E/2011/100.



The present report describes efforts made by the United Nations, in cooperation with the Palestinian Authority, donors and civil society, to support the Palestinian population and institutions.



## I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted in compliance with General Assembly resolution 65/134, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to it, at its sixty-sixth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the resolution, containing an assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people and of the needs still unmet, and specific proposals for responding effectively to them. The reporting period is from May 2010 to April 2011.

2. Information on the living and socio-economic conditions of the Palestinian people is provided in several reports prepared by other United Nations agencies, in particular: (a) the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan (to be issued); and (b) the annual report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) (A/65/13).

3. The humanitarian, economic and development needs of the Palestinian people are reflected in several documents. The Consolidated Appeals Process for 2011 sought \$575 million to address the humanitarian needs of the most vulnerable and where the Palestinian Authority outreach is limited, namely the Gaza Strip, Area C, including the seam zones, and East Jerusalem. The medium-term response plan for 2009-2010 outlined the United Nations contribution to the national development and State-building efforts of Palestinians as defined in the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan. UNRWA programme goals for the period 2010-2015 were reflected in the Agency's medium-term strategy, which was estimated at \$675 million for 2010-2011, excluding emergency relief interventions. The Palestinian National Development Plan 2011-2013 outlined priority development needs worth \$4.161 billion. The Palestinian Authority programme of the 13th government, entitled "Palestine: ending the occupation, establishing the State", outlined the government's two-year State-building strategy, which was updated on 30 August 2010 by a document entitled "Homestretch to freedom: the second year of the 13th government programme", which outlined the remaining steps to build a viable State by August 2011.

4. During the reporting period, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority continued its efforts to support the peace process and to ensure effective coordination among the Palestinian Authority, the United Nations, the international community and the Government of Israel. The Office also continued to document the economic and social conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and develop policies and programmes to improve them.

5. The present report provides an overview of the work of the United Nations to assist the Palestinian people and institutions, as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 65/134. Also included is a summary of key political developments and challenges relevant to the reporting period, as the international community works to alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people, as well as to support the

State-building efforts of the Palestinian Authority and negotiations between the parties.

## **II. Overview of the current situation**

### **A. Political context**

6. Israeli-Palestinian proximity talks, mediated by the United States of America from May to August 2010, paved the way for the resumption of direct negotiations on 2 September. However, the negotiations were suspended on 26 September, when the partial 10-month Israeli restraint on settlement construction in the West Bank expired. Both the Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu and the President of the Palestinian Authority, Mahmoud Abbas, agreed during their meetings in September to seek a solution based on two States for two peoples, that the negotiations could be completed within one year, and that their aim was to resolve borders, security, refugees, Jerusalem and all other core issues.

7. The Quartet continued its efforts to help the parties find a way back to direct negotiations. As agreed by the Quartet principals in Munich on 5 February, Quartet envoys met separately with Palestinian and Israeli negotiators, and have been giving serious consideration to the views of the parties on how to bring about resumed negotiations on all core issues, including borders and security. The Quartet reaffirmed that negotiations should lead to an outcome that ends the occupation that began in 1967 and resolves all permanent status issues, in order to end the conflict and achieve a two-State solution. The Quartet reiterated its support for concluding those negotiations by September 2011. The Secretary-General continued to support efforts to help the parties resolve the conflict and achieve the two-State solution.

8. In the West Bank, the Palestinian Authority has made serious gains in the pursuit of a State-building agenda in the Territory under the Authority's control. On 30 August, the Authority issued a programme document entitled "Homestretch to freedom: the second year of the 13th government programme", which sets further goals and means of strengthening State institutions for a future State by August 2011. In September 2010, the Quartet and the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee took note of the assessment of the World Bank of 16 September 2010 that the performance of the Palestinian Authority in institution-building and delivery of public services made the Authority well positioned for the establishment of a State.

9. During the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee meeting on 13 April, the United Nations made clear its assessment that in the six areas, namely health, education, governance, social protection, food security and livelihoods and infrastructure, where it is mostly engaged with the Palestinian Authority, the functions of the Authority were sufficient for a viable State government. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund also reported strong progress in institution-building at the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee meeting, the Chair of which concluded that the Palestinian Authority was above the threshold for a functioning State in the key sectors studied. However, those admirable achievements remained constrained by the continued Israeli occupation and a political divide between the West Bank and Gaza, and thus did not apply yet to East Jerusalem, much of Area C and Gaza.

10. The internal Palestinian divide continued during the reporting period, inhibiting the ability of the Palestinian Authority to extend its State-building work to Gaza. That underscored the need for progress towards Palestinian unity within the framework of the Palestinian Authority and the commitments of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). In March, in response to popular protests in Gaza and Ramallah, the PLO leadership and Hamas in Gaza announced their intentions to seek reconciliation. President Abbas said that he intended to visit the Gaza Strip to discuss unity with Hamas officials. Both sides engaged in consultations with the Egyptian authorities and other regional Governments to advance unity. On 27 April, Fatah and Hamas initialled a preliminary understanding for a reconciliation agreement. On 8 February, the Palestinian Authority had called for local elections to be held on 9 July. On 17 February, President Abbas declared that presidential and legislative elections should also be held as soon as possible in the West Bank and in Gaza.

11. In Gaza, key elements of Security Council resolution 1860 (2009) remained unfulfilled. Hamas remained in de facto control of the Gaza Strip. Israel continued to maintain closure of the Strip. On 20 June, following the flotilla incident of 31 May, the Government of Israel announced measures aimed at “liberalizing the system by which civilian goods enter Gaza”. On 8 December, the Government of Israel decided to further “liberalize” exports from Gaza. The flow of construction materials, particularly aggregate, iron bar and cement, entering Gaza through tunnels between Gaza and Egypt continued to be significantly higher than the amount entering through Israeli-controlled crossings. Concerns remained about the smuggling of weapons into Gaza.

12. The humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip remained a priority for the United Nations. The Secretary-General continued to urge the Government of Israel to further relax the closure, and for further measures to promote full economic recovery and reconstruction of Gaza. The Government of Israel approved more than \$150 million of United Nations projects involving “dual-use” materials during the reporting period. There has been some reconstruction of the destroyed civilian infrastructure and damage caused by Israel’s military operation “Cast Lead”.

13. A fragile and uneasy de facto calm was broadly maintained between Gaza and Israel, but indiscriminate firing of rockets, mortars and other munitions on Israel by Hamas and other militant groups increased dramatically in 2011, amid another round of worrying escalation. The frequency of Israeli operations in Gaza also vastly increased during the reporting period, resulting in civilian deaths and injuries. The United Nations supported efforts to de-escalate tensions, but the underlying causes of instability remained unaddressed.

14. Notwithstanding continued performance of the Palestinian security forces and an overall improved security climate marked by the lowest presence of Israeli troops since 2005, violent acts by settlers against the Palestinian population and violence against the settler population continued during the reporting period. The first quarter of 2011 witnessed an increase in violent incidents and a rise in tensions in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. In East Jerusalem, that was due in part to settlement activity, house demolitions and evictions, expulsion of East Jerusalem Palestinian residents and other provocative actions. There was also a de facto settlement restraint in East Jerusalem for a part of the reporting period and the Israeli authorities made efforts to ease access to Temple Mount/Haram Al-Sharif for

prayers during the month of Ramadan. On 23 March, a bomb exploded at a bus terminal in the centre of Jerusalem, killing one and injuring some 30 civilians.

## **B. Humanitarian and socio-economic context**

### **Economic and fiscal developments**

15. Real growth of the gross domestic product (GDP) was estimated at 9.3 per cent for 2010, consisting of 7.6 per cent in the West Bank and 15.1 per cent in Gaza. While the gradual easing of movement restrictions contributed to economic growth in the West Bank, the main drivers were public expenditure by the Palestinian Authority and donor support,<sup>1</sup> and also higher private sector confidence and reforms by the Authority. Growth in Gaza was in part attributed to the relaxation of the closure by Israel. Consumer price inflation fell from 4 per cent at the end of 2009 to 2.9 per cent in 2010. Unemployment rates fell slightly in 2010, compared with 2009, from 17.8 to 17.2 per cent in the West Bank, and from 38.6 to 37.8 per cent in Gaza. Concerns about the long-term prospects of the Palestinian economy continued to include the need for recovery of the private sector, reduction of dependency on foreign aid and public expenditure, diversification of the economy, access to natural resources and removal of access restrictions.

16. The government of President Abbas and Prime Minister Salam Fayyad continued to implement key economic and fiscal reforms. The Palestine Authority estimated that the annual deficit would fall to \$1 billion in 2011, reflecting a 16 per cent decrease from 2010 and a steady decline over the past three years. Efforts to improve the collection of utility bills and other revenues have been strengthened. Value added in services accounted for 17.2 per cent of West Bank GDP in 2010, followed by mining, manufacturing, electricity and water (14.1 per cent) and wholesale and retail trade (11.9 per cent). On 4 February, Prime Minister Netanyahu agreed with Quartet representative, Tony Blair, on a package of measures to help improve Palestinian livelihoods and support economic growth in the West Bank and in Gaza. The package included enhancements in energy, water and exports for Gaza, and further support on telecommunications, schools and clinics in Area C in the West Bank.

17. Economic activity in Gaza was positively affected by the 20 June 2010 decision (see para. 11 above). Value added in services accounted for 32.7 per cent of Gaza's GDP in 2010, followed by public administration and defence (22.4 per cent) and construction (9.5 per cent). The estimated number of tunnels in operation at the end of the reporting period had fallen to roughly 300.<sup>2</sup>

### **Humanitarian and socio-economic developments**

18. During the reporting period from 1 May 2010 to 12 April 2011 (see A/65/77-E/2010/56), 112 Palestinians were killed (99 in Gaza, 13 in the West Bank) and 1,270 injured (386 in Gaza, 884 in the West Bank) by Israeli security forces,

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<sup>1</sup> See World Bank, "The underpinnings of the future Palestinian state: sustainable growth and institutions", Economic Monitoring Report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee (21 September, 2010).

<sup>2</sup> See United Nations, "Easing the blockade: assessing the humanitarian impact on the population of the Gaza Strip", Special Focus (March 2011), and A/65/77-E/2010/56, para. 18.

compared with 63 fatalities and 1,100 injuries during the previous period. In the West Bank, growing settler violence towards Palestinians resulted in three fatalities, 130 injuries and damage to property. During the reporting period, 11 Israelis were killed, including a family of five members on 11 March in the settlement of Itamar, and 91 injured, compared with 5 Israelis killed and 191 injured during the previous reporting period. Six people were killed and 66 injured as a result of intra-Palestinian conflict, compared with 47 killed and 62 injured in the previous reporting period. Militants launched 828 rockets and mortar shells towards Israel in the reporting period, compared with 91 in the previous period. Violations against children continued, as described in the report of the Secretary-General on Children in Armed Conflict (S/2011/250, paras. 120-129).

19. The level of food insecurity in the Occupied Palestinian Territory decreased from 36 per cent in 2009 to 33 per cent in 2010, consisting of 52 per cent in Gaza and 22 per cent in the West Bank. Food insecurity levels were exacerbated in the West Bank by continued demolitions of housing and livelihood assets, which increased fourfold during the reporting period. Particularly in Area C, demolition of water harvesting cisterns and other livelihoods assets increased significantly, with more than 15 demolitions since the beginning of 2011. In the Gaza Strip, household vulnerability to food insecurity was also affected by lack of access to agricultural land in the buffer zone and limited access to fishing areas.

#### **Movement, humanitarian access and operational space**

20. The Israeli authorities continued to adopt measures to ease the movement of Palestinians between most Palestinian urban centres in the West Bank, excluding East Jerusalem. As of the drafting of the present report, there were approximately 500 closure obstacles inside the West Bank, 50 fewer than at the beginning of the reporting period. The positive impact of those measures, however, was offset in part by the number of ad hoc “flying” checkpoints, which averaged about 92 per week. During 2010, UNRWA faced continued restrictions in accessing refugee communities in the West Bank, with major implications on its ability to meet the humanitarian needs of Palestine refugees. Ongoing restrictions on Palestinian access to land, social services and economic opportunities in East Jerusalem and Area C maintained both occupied areas in a chronic state of arrested development, with deteriorating living conditions and increased vulnerability.

21. In Gaza, the additional restrictions on land and sea access put in place by the Israel Defense Forces in the wake of operation “Cast Lead” remained in place. The land along the border with Israel remained a “no-go” area for Gazans, with Israel citing security concerns in denying almost all access within 1,000 to 1,500 metres of the border. Thirty-five per cent of Gaza’s agricultural land and 85 per cent of the maritime space continued to be inaccessible, affecting 178,000 people.

22. The volume of people travelling through the Erez crossing point, the only passage for movement of people between Gaza and the West Bank via Israel, rose slightly during the reporting period, from 106 per day in the first half of 2010 to 114 per day in the second half of 2010. Permits for Gaza businessmen rose sharply, from an average of 87 per month to 503 per month.

23. International and national non-governmental organizations in Gaza continued to face pressure from the de facto authorities. In some cases, national

non-governmental organizations were forced to close or came under direct control of Hamas authorities.

24. Access and operational space for staff of humanitarian agencies remained restricted. From May 2010 to March 2011, there were also 512 reported incidents of delayed or denied access of United Nations staff at Israeli checkpoints, resulting in a loss to the United Nations of approximately 344 working days. Many of those affected included teachers, medical doctors, nurses, social workers and field office staff, negatively affecting the delivery of education and health services and relief operations. The majority of the incidents occurred as United Nations staff crossed the barrier on the Jerusalem periphery. A unit within the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat, working on behalf of the Humanitarian Coordinator, continued to address the issues and support the operations of the United Nations and international non-governmental organizations throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

#### **Barrier**

25. During the reporting period, no new sections were added to the barrier, which was being constructed contrary to the advisory opinion rendered by the International Court of Justice in July 2004. As of February 2011, 62 per cent of the planned 709 km barrier remained completed. The United Nations Register of Damage Caused by the Construction of the Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, established pursuant to General Assembly resolution ES-10/17, continued to perform its outreach activities and collect claims. More than 16,000 claims and more than 150,000 supporting documents were collected. Claim collection activities in Tubas and Jenin governorates were completed and the work was in advanced stages in Qalqilya and Tulkarem governorates as of the drafting of the present report. Other areas of continuing concern included limited access on the part of farmers to agricultural land behind the barrier and the situation of those communities in the “seam zone” that face restricted access to health and education services.

### **III. United Nations response**

26. The United Nations system continued to pursue an integrated political, humanitarian, recovery and development strategy. It continued to promote a negotiated permanent status agreement for a two-State solution, a durable Israeli-Palestinian peace and the implementation of road map obligations by the parties. The United Nations continued planning and implementing extensive humanitarian programmes, in particular in Gaza, while strengthening its support to Palestinian State-building efforts.

#### **A. Human and social development**

27. The United Nations coordinated and delivered humanitarian assistance in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including the provision of food assistance to more than 1 million people, water and sanitation assistance to more than 1.5 million, and health and nutrition services to nearly 2.5 million. The United Nations also

continued to support the State-building agenda of the Palestinian Authority and the realization of the Millennium Development Goals in the Territory.

### **Education**

28. UNRWA provided free school education to more than 260,000 students in 325 elementary and preparatory schools in Gaza and the West Bank. Two thirds of the schools operated on a double-shift system, including 95 per cent of UNRWA schools in Gaza, where even that measure proved insufficient to accommodate the student population. During the reporting period, UNRWA created “rotating classes” in each of its schools in order to absorb student growth. To accommodate the growing student populations, UNRWA operated two schools from shipping containers, which were also placed in six other schools to provide emergency classroom space. There was chronic overcrowding and double, or sometimes triple, utilization of classrooms and, in many classrooms, three or four students sat at a desk designed for two.

29. The United Nations continued to provide extensive opportunities for vocational and non-formal education for Palestinians. UNRWA provided 1,840 youth from the West Bank with technical vocational training in three colleges in Ramallah. UNESCO continued the provision of learning opportunities for vulnerable and marginalized communities through a non-formal education support centre in Nablus. The support of the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) to the Palestinian Authority Ministry of Education, under the child-friendly school initiative focused on remedial learning programmes to around 20,000 vulnerable children in 100 lowest performing schools, in order to help them improve their Arabic language and mathematics tests. In efforts to support reconstruction efforts, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and UNRWA jointly implemented a skills development programme primarily targeting the construction of refugee shelters in Gaza. ILO and UNRWA also worked to increase the skills and employability of older students in the construction sector.

30. ILO and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) promoted a culture of entrepreneurship and self-employment among young women and men. Under the auspices of the Palestinian Authority Ministries of Labour and Education, the “know about business” training package was rolled out to vocational and secondary schools. In view of its positive contribution, the project was being expanded to include all vocational and educational institutions.

31. UNESCO continued to provide technical assistance for the national teacher education strategy, particularly through support to the Commission for Developing the Teaching Profession. UNICEF supported in-service teacher training to at least 2,500 teachers on interactive learning methods and the use of math and science kits. UNICEF support to the finalization of the national policy framework for early childhood development was coupled with early learning opportunities for at least 10,000 children through capacity-building of 450 parents, 320 caregivers and 30 kindergarten supervisors, and the provision of early childhood development kits to 50 kindergartens. UNICEF continued to support the school management information system to inform policy and programme interventions and enhance identification of gaps and vulnerabilities for urgent interventions.

32. The UNDP Deprived Families Economic Empowerment Programme continued to implement the Al Fakhora scholarship programme for Gazan students. In 2010,

100 students were selected from Gaza's universities for a full scholarship in areas of youth and education.

33. All pupils in UNRWA Gaza schools received a small meal under the school feeding programme. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and the Palestinian Authority Ministry of Education partnered to improve health and nutrition at 161 schools, benefiting 67,000 students. The partnership also generated substantial income for women's groups and community-based organizations, which were contracted to provide food for the school canteens.

34. The UNICEF-led education cluster supported the advocacy efforts of the humanitarian country team for 26 schools in Area C that were in urgent need of rehabilitation and emergency education support. The specific needs of each school were assessed and the information shared with the international community and key stakeholders. UNICEF, UNRWA and the Palestinian Authority Ministry of Education launched a back-to-school advocacy campaign in Area C. The event, widely covered by international, regional and local media, drew the attention of concerned partners and stakeholders to the right to education of all children.

### **Health**

35. UNRWA continued to play a major role in the provision of health care, operating 42 health facilities in Gaza and the West Bank and 19 health points and five mobile clinics in the West Bank, in total employing more than 2,000 people. The number of consultations continued to increase, placing greater demands on the limited health services of UNRWA. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) continued to provide technical and financial support to four women's health centres in Hebron and the Jabalia and Al Buraj refugee camps in Gaza. In the area of mental health, UNRWA held counselling sessions, while the World Health Organization (WHO) worked with the Palestinian Authority Ministry of Health to develop a strategic mental health plan.

36. The United Nations continued to focus on programming for infants and young children. Working jointly with Palestinian Authority Ministry of Health and the National Breastfeeding Committee, UNICEF supported the promotion of infant and young child feeding practices, through a breastfeeding campaign targeting around 7,500 mothers in Gaza. In addition, WHO supported the Ministry of Health in implementing the national strategy of infant and young child feeding practices. In support of the WHO strategy on integrated management of childhood illness, UNICEF supported the training of around 100 health-care providers and made available forms for recording sick children to health clinics.

37. UNICEF supported the Ministry of Health in maintaining high immunization coverage across the Occupied Palestinian Territory through the procurement of polio vaccines for the protection of 42,000 children, and procurement and logistics support for all other vaccines. UNICEF also provided urgent laboratory kits for laboratory micronutrient testing and printed maternal and child health handbooks for growth monitoring.

38. WHO worked with the Ministry of Health to compile information for an online health facilities database, including locations, types of services, specialized staff and equipment. WHO also worked with the Ministry to implement a jointly developed



strategic plan to prevent non-communicable diseases, and continued to support the Ministry in strengthening the nutrition surveillance system to monitor the situation of infants, pregnant women and schoolchildren.

39. As part of the programmes under the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the United Nations, together with the Palestinian Ministry of Health and the national AIDS committee, conducted training for 5,162 peer educators; 452 health personnel and community workers on HIV counselling and testing; 22 doctors on specialized antiretroviral treatment; 995 health workers on blood safety and universal precautions; and 2,333 political, community, religious leaders and police and armed services on basic HIV knowledge and stigma reduction. It also produced 278 television and radio shows on HIV prevention.

40. Also through the Global Fund, UNICEF supported efforts to improve adolescents' knowledge of HIV prevention, including training 515 trainers and peer educators through awareness-raising workshops; sensitization of 162 community, religious and youth leaders on HIV/AIDS and stigma reduction; and the production of two booklets, on HIV prevention and sexual reproductive health, for schools, adolescent-friendly spaces and UNRWA clinics. UNICEF supported a national knowledge attitude practice survey, which will provide a national baseline to guide planning for HIV prevention interventions in 2011 and beyond. Through the Global Fund, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime supported the development of a national strategy to address HIV prevention, treatment and care among drug users and prison inmates. The Office also helped to establish two drop-in centres for injecting drug users in Gaza and the West Bank.

41. In addition to technical assistance and direct humanitarian programming, the United Nations supported the development of health infrastructure. UNDP and WHO jointly conducted an assessment of public health infrastructure needs in the Gaza Strip, aimed at identifying hospitals, clinics and primary health-care centres most in need of rehabilitation. In the West Bank, UNDP completed the expansion of a hospital in Tulkarem, adding a floor with 41 beds, and is completing the expansion of another hospital in Jenin, where two additional floors and 95 beds will be added. Rehabilitation efforts for three community mental health centres were under way, with two (Nablus and Ramallah) due to be completed in 2011. UNDP purchased three new ambulances for the Palestinian Ministry of Health and Civil Defence Department.

### **Employment**

42. UNDP and ILO supported the establishment of a Technical Advisory Unit at the Ministry of Labour leveraging ILO technical expertise in the development, implementation and monitoring of labour market policies.

43. UNDP continued a programme providing emergency job creation schemes in solid waste management, agriculture and fishery, benefiting 50,000 people. UNDP strengthened activities under the Deprived Families Economic Empowerment Programme and other microfinance projects, providing income for more than 6,000 households. The construction of youth and women's centres, schools for the blind, road and other basic infrastructure, additional classrooms and water networks also continued to generate employment for Palestinians through a poverty-oriented small-scale infrastructure employment generation programme. A total of 21 projects

were completed in 2010, seven were ongoing and 67 were selected and approved for additional funding in 2011.

### **Targeted social protection**

44. The World Bank-funded Social Safety Net Reform Project was merged with European Union-funded programmes during the reporting period. The cash transfer programme provided assistance to more than 63,000 poor households on a quarterly basis. The reform effort supported by the project and led by the Palestinian Ministry of Social Affairs resulted in the establishment of an effective poverty-targeting database as well as the systematic use of the banking system to provide and to monitor cash transfers. UNRWA distributed 538,185 food parcels and around \$5.4 million in supplementary cash assistance to nearly 32,820 households through its programme for special hardship cases. UNRWA provided a family income supplement to bridge the abject poverty gap for 10,441 individuals in the West Bank and 68,321 individuals in Gaza. A total of \$8,998,854 was distributed through the programme.

### **Culture**

45. UNESCO continued its technical assistance to the Palestinian Authority with a view to its future adherence to and implementation of key international instruments. UNESCO continued to lead a multi-agency programme on culture through the UNDP-Spain Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund. With support from donors, longer-term protection, preservation and enhancement measures were undertaken at eight cultural heritage sites, including one in Gaza. Such interventions aimed at developing models for the management of cultural heritage with international standards and enhancing opportunities for domestic and international cultural tourism. UNESCO also worked with the Palestinian Authority on a national inventory of intangible cultural heritage.

### **Food security and agriculture**

46. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) assisted more than 10,000 households in the West Bank and Gaza during the reporting period in order to maximize and safeguard the use of their assets and resources and to expand their livelihood opportunities. Support was provided in backyard food production, herding, fisheries, cottage industries, home gardening, food-processing and land rehabilitation. FAO also supported the mainstreaming of gender perspectives in agriculture and dedicated significant resources to empowering youth.

47. The UNDP Deprived Families Economic Empowerment Programme project supported the establishment of 2,500 sustainable rural and agricultural enterprises in the fishery, livestock, greenhouse and food processing sectors in Gaza through grants and microfinancing schemes. Each enterprise was composed of one to four employees and generated sufficient income to support one to three households. The Islamic Development Bank and the Governments of Japan and Italy supported the initiatives, creating 12,000 jobs as of the drafting of the present report. Women led approximately 37 per cent of the enterprises. Through its emergency support project, UNDP replanted 3,000 dunums of vegetables, rehabilitated 118 fishing boats and fishery gearing boxes, provided input materials for 128 poultry farms and rehabilitated 39 groundwater wells and 600 greenhouses.

### **Human rights, women, children and youth**

48. The United Nations continued to mainstream human rights into all of its work and provide technical assistance in order to strengthen the capacity of the Palestinian Authority on human rights. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and other United Nations agencies started a programme of work with the Palestinian Authority to comprehensively update and revise the Palestinian national plan of action for human rights, which had been jointly prepared in 2000 but subsequently suspended due to the political situation.

49. Together with other United Nations agencies and civil society, OHCHR participated in the revision of the Palestinian Penal Code, with the aim of ensuring that any new legislation would be in accordance with international standards. In continuation of its programme to train the Palestinian judiciary on international human rights standards, OHCHR held a three-day seminar in the West Bank for 12 Palestinian judges. In 2011, the Palestinian Authority announced that civilians would no longer be tried in military courts, a decision welcomed by United Nations agencies and civil society, which had advocated for its adoption.

50. The special needs of women, children and youth remained a focus for the United Nations. Acting under the umbrella of the Ministry of Social Affairs, UN-Women continued to support the Mehwar Centre, which hosted and protected a monthly average of 25 women and their children from violence and honour killings.

51. UNFPA supported training of 350 women from municipalities, health centres, rehabilitation centres, non-governmental organizations and local communities on psychosocial support and mental health, gender-based violence and human rights. UNFPA continued to support four community-based networks, through which more than 35,000 vulnerable women benefited from 2,100 outreach awareness sessions, and involved men in capacity-building courses and counselling. Family protection units established within the police force in the West Bank were strengthened through training of 250 police officers and 50 prosecutors from the office of the Prosecutor General. More than 200 imams and women preachers also participated in child rights and protection awareness training, enabling them to advocate for child rights issues during Friday sermons and religious sessions in mosques.

52. UNICEF provided direct psychosocial support through non-governmental partners reaching around 20,000 children and 10,000 caregivers. Psychosocial teams, numbering 11 in the West Bank and 5 in Gaza, conducted group counselling sessions, individual counselling, emergency interventions, non-formal education and peer-to-peer counselling. In East Jerusalem and Area C, emergency teams provided support to communities on both sides of the barrier. UNICEF continued to support 20 family centres in Gaza, benefiting more than 80,000 children through a range of protection services.

53. UNICEF continued to lead an inter-agency working group for the monitoring and response mechanism on grave violations against children in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory, in accordance with Security Council resolutions 1612 (2005) and 1882 (2009). In partnership with a coalition of Israeli, Palestinian and international organizations, UNICEF supported the development of a monitoring and reporting database to analyse trends and inform advocacy, response and

prevention strategies. The database included violations specific to the socio-political context in the Territory.

54. UNICEF, UNDP and UNFPA supported the Palestinian Ministry of Youth and Sports in developing the Cross-Sector National Strategy for Youth (2011-2013). The strategy will be the basis of a national action plan for youth in 2011. UNICEF supported the development of a planning and monitoring system at the Ministry that includes a database of existing youth centres and youth services. UNICEF continued to support 100 community-based organizations offering quality adolescent-friendly activities to about 65,000 boys and girls through after-school activities including sports, drama and life-skills education. In June 2010, UNFPA launched a project to increase Palestinian youth participation in early recovery, improve their prospects for employment and reduce their social and economic marginalization. By the end of 2010, the project had reached 518 youths (49 per cent females). A second phase was planned for 2011-2012.

55. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime supported the general administration of reform and rehabilitation centres to strengthen the management, operation and oversight of civil prisons administered by the Palestinian Authority. The Office and the centres developed general and specialized prison staff training, strengthened information management systems, developed pilot vocational training programmes for inmates, and improved prison health. Assistance focused on compliance with the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners. The technical assistance provided in those areas was designed as an initial step towards achieving sustainable reform and development of the civil prison service in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and with a view to establishing a firm foundation for longer-term reform within the Palestinian criminal justice sector as a whole.

56. In May 2010, ILO supported the establishment of a legal clinic to assist Palestinian workers in Israel with regard to their rights and compensation.

57. Within the framework of the joint United Nations programme on gender equality and women's empowerment, supported by the UNDP-Spain Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund, ILO assisted in the establishment of a national women's employment committee that focuses primarily on creating a positive environment by reforming discriminatory laws and planning for gender-sensitive employment in order to increase the influence of gender advocates and workers' and employers' organizations in decision-making and planning processes. The committee also assists the Palestinian Ministry of Labour and social partners in implementing specific measures to promote women's employment and their protection in the workplace.

### **Environment**

58. The World Bank continued to contribute to the development of a sustainable institutional structure for the water and wastewater sector in Gaza, including through strengthening the regulatory and institutional capacity of the Palestinian Water Authority. The World Bank completed the rehabilitation of a sewage pumping station in the Beit Lahia area of northern Gaza and the construction of a new wastewater treatment plant was under way. When completed in 2013, the facility will benefit more than 300,000 people and irrigate up to 1,500 hectares of land adjacent to the plant.

59. UNDP continued to support the capacity-building of relevant ministries and civil society organizations to adapt to climate change challenges in the short and long term and to integrate climate change coping mechanisms in the Palestinian National Development Plan 2011-2013.

60. The ongoing Southern West Bank Solid Waste Management Project of the World Bank, which will benefit approximately 600,000 people in the Bethlehem and Hebron governorates, was due to enter the construction phase in June 2011. New landfill plans for the project, which is located in Area C, were approved during the reporting period and a construction permit was expected.

## **B. United Nations system emergency assistance**

61. The 2011 Consolidated Appeals Process for the Occupied Palestinian Territory sought \$575 million for 213 projects, including 147 from local and international non-governmental organizations and 66 from United Nations agencies. It focuses on bringing humanitarian assistance and providing protection to the most vulnerable populations in Gaza, Area C and East Jerusalem.

### **Emergency food support**

62. The World Food Programme (WFP) supported about 800,000 vulnerable and food-insecure non-refugee Palestinians, including about 486,000 in the West Bank and 313,000 in Gaza. UNRWA provided emergency food aid to about 650,000 refugees in Gaza and 186,173 individuals in the West Bank. The joint assistance programme between UNRWA and WFP for 36,000 refugee and non-refugee Bedouin herders in the West Bank resulted in food insecurity in the group dropping from 79 per cent to 55 per cent.

63. The WFP urban voucher project in the West Bank assisted 6,000 vulnerable households during the reporting period, providing a financial stimulus to the local economy. A similar project in Gaza targeted 15,000 beneficiaries and enabled products valuing \$2,504,500 to be purchased since its launch in 2009. In 2010, the voucher programme in the West Bank injected \$2,836,000 into the local economy.

### **Emergency income generation**

64. UNRWA provided temporary work opportunities to 111,853 beneficiaries to alleviate the impact of high unemployment and poverty rates, creating more than 5.3 million days of employment. UNRWA also provided more than \$1 million in cash assistance to 112,180 individuals. At the start of the school year, UNRWA provided NIS 100 to 212,371 students in both elementary and preparatory schools, for a total of more than \$5.8 million. In addition, UNDP provided income-generation activities to more than 6,000 families through economic empowerment and microfinance projects.

### **Emergency health support**

65. WHO led the process of defining emergency health sector standards and helped in standardizing mobile clinic services and compiling a mobile clinic database. It also developed a system for monitoring emergency aid services to the

Palestinian population of East Jerusalem and helped to address restrictions on access to East Jerusalem hospitals.

66. Under WHO leadership, the United Nations and partners developed a health and nutrition sector response plan that aims at improving access to essential health services to the Palestinians residing in the West Bank and Gaza. The plan formed a basis for the health section of the common humanitarian action plan and provided a framework for development and selection of individual health and nutrition cluster partner projects for the Consolidated Appeal for 2011.

67. WHO helped to fill the gaps in pharmaceutical supplies and continued to help in handling the large volume of medical supplies donated to Gaza, which entailed renting additional warehouses and assisting in sorting, registering, storing and delivering medical supplies and in disposing of expired or unusable medicines. With funds from the Government of Italy, WHO provided urgently needed medical equipment, spare parts and technical assistance to maintain, repair and improve existing equipment.

#### **Emergency water and sanitation support**

68. The UNICEF-led cluster on water, sanitation and hygiene maintained coordination among cluster partners, highlighted gaps and vulnerabilities through a harmonized database, enhanced advocacy concerning crucial issues and strengthened cluster partner capacity through trainings and workshops.

69. Support from UNICEF for emergency water, sanitation and hygiene benefited about 200,000 people (including 175,000 children). UNICEF provided tankered water to 12,351 people in south Hebron and about 90,000 children in 90 schools in Gaza. UNICEF supported repairs of water networks and pumps in order to improve access to safe drinking water for 36,000 people. UNICEF rehabilitated sewage networks and pumps, providing adequate sanitation for about 4,200 people. A total of 34 cisterns were cleaned and disinfected and the awareness of local communities was raised on safe water handling and hygiene. In collaboration with the Palestinian Authority Ministry of Education, UNICEF supported the construction and rehabilitation of water, sanitation and hygiene facilities in 59 schools, providing access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene facilities for about 40,000 children and more than 700 teachers (around 50 per cent of whom were girls and women). Hygiene promotion activities benefited 16,750 students and 525 teachers.

#### **Emergency agriculture support**

70. FAO, in collaboration with the International Committee of the Red Cross and non-governmental organizations, led and coordinated a response to a major pest outbreak on tomato fields that affected more than 2,000 households in the Gaza Strip. FAO provided land reclamation and livelihoods assistance packages to 656 farming households that lost their livelihoods during operation "Cast Lead".

71. FAO also monitored vulnerability of small-scale farmers and herders in the Occupied Palestinian Territory to climatic, economic and political shocks. Developed in collaboration with the water, sanitation and hygiene cluster, the monitoring system and response framework was designed to result in a more coordinated humanitarian approach to emergency preparedness and response and advocate for the economic security of the vulnerable communities.

### **C. United Nations system support to Palestinian institutions**

72. The United Nations sought to integrate its support to the building of Palestinian institutions as a matter of priority. It therefore prepared a coordinated package of capacity development programming for which \$30.7 million is being sought.

73. The United Nations enhanced the efforts of the Palestinian Authority to collect revenue and accelerate customs clearance procedures. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) continued to support the modernization of Palestinian customs through training on automated systems. UNCTAD also provided policy and advisory services in trade facilitation and policy, including a detailed study on Palestinian external trade. UNCTAD continued to support the Palestinian private sector through the provision of advisory services to the Palestinian Shippers' Council.

74. UN-Women assisted the Palestinian Ministry of Women's Affairs in developing a cohesive cross-sectoral national gender strategy that forms an integral part of the Palestinian National Development Plan 2011-2013.

75. FAO supported the Ministry of Agriculture in developing a cohesive national strategy for the agricultural development sector, the "shared vision". UN-Women assisted the Palestinian Authority in undertaking a gender analysis of the shared vision to mainstream gender into the 2011-2013 Action Plan. FAO provided technical advice to the Ministry on food safety, which included recommendations for a central veterinary laboratory and the development of a national animal identification and animal product tracking system.

76. Acting under the umbrella of the Mehwar Centre project (see para. 50 above), UN-Women provided technical support to the Palestinian Ministry of Social Affairs towards the establishment of a national social protection system for female victims of violence, adopting international human rights standards. UNICEF support to the Ministry included finalization of a national strategy and action plan based on the amended "Child Law" and the piloting of a non-violence in school policy in 93 schools in the West Bank and 20 schools in Gaza.

77. UNFPA trained Palestinian Authority ministries on developing social indicators and on the use of data in national planning. UNICEF and UNFPA jointly supported the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics in implementing the 2010 national family survey to collect data on child health, women's health, youth and the elderly. UNFPA supported the implementation of the first national migration survey.

78. UNDP worked with the Palestinian Ministry of Justice to develop its institutional capacity and facilitate the improved delivery of justice for the Palestinian people. Focusing on legislative drafting, administration of justice and legal aid, the programme aimed at strengthening the Ministry's technical and operational capacity. UNDP established a working group comprising Palestinian government officials, civil society representatives and criminal law experts from the Arab world to provide advice on the development of a penal code. UNDP also introduced new courthouse case management software.

79. ILO technically supported the development of a labour inspection and social dialogue strategy, including outlining the main principles for its implementation.

The initiative was complemented with a comprehensive capacity-building programme for employers' and workers' organizations.

80. The World Bank continued to provide support to improve fiscal planning and management at the national and municipal levels.

#### **D. Private sector development**

81. UNRWA financed 12,000 loans valued at \$19.73 million for Palestinian microenterprises and households. While the West Bank portfolio grew by 20 per cent (9,500 loans valued at \$16.06 million), credit outreach in Gaza shrunk to 2,400 loans valued at just \$3.67 million owing to the closure. Despite the situation in Gaza, UNRWA was able to cover 126 per cent of its running costs of \$3.69 million from its credit operations.

82. The United Nations was actively engaged in supporting cooperatives and microenterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises. ILO assisted the Palestinian Ministry of National Economy on a strategy paper for establishing a development agency for such enterprises. ILO also supported the national cooperative reform process, including the newly adopted unified cooperative law.

#### **E. Coordination of United Nations assistance**

83. Humanitarian and longer-term assistance continued through the humanitarian country team and the United Nations country team. Work through the mechanisms and their associated structures helped to ensure programming coherence and greater alignment with the Palestinian Authority, including with the Palestinian National Development Plan 2011-2013. Relations with all actors and the donor community also improved, helping to ensure coordination with the broader aid community, joint advocacy positions and reduced duplications.

### **IV. Donor response to the crisis**

#### **Budgetary and fiscal support**

84. In 2010, donors provided about \$1.2 billion towards direct budget support of the Palestinian Authority. The budgetary external financing requirement for 2011 was estimated at \$1 billion, down more than 16 per cent from 2010, reflecting the improved capacity of the Palestinian Authority to collect local revenue. A total of \$200 million was received, and \$500 million pledged for 2011. Donor support remains critical for addressing the Palestinian Authority budget shortfall of roughly \$300 million.

#### **Donor coordination**

85. The local aid coordination structure continued to serve as a key forum for discussing and providing input to new sector strategies and the Palestinian National Development Plan 2011-2013. The coordination of humanitarian advocacy and information, led by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, also continued during the reporting period.



86. Two meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee were held during the reporting period. The Joint Liaison Committee, a tripartite coordination mechanism comprising the Government of Israel, the Palestinian Authority and representatives of the international community, also met twice in the period.

## **V. Unmet needs**

87. The 2010 Consolidated Appeals Process called for \$559 million for 236 humanitarian and early-recovery projects in the areas of food security, agriculture, protection, education, health, water and sanitation, and coordination and support services. As of 31 December, funding stood at 50 per cent. The 2011 Consolidated Appeals Process requests \$576 million for critical humanitarian activities. As of 1 March, only 7 per cent of the requested funds had been pledged or received. The low response rate, against the backdrop of low funding in 2010, threatens the ability of United Nations agencies and their partners to provide critical assistance to Palestinian people. Additional support is also urgently needed for the UNRWA core budget, which faces a potential shortfall of \$53 million for 2011.

88. United Nations agencies continued to assist vulnerable Palestinians in Area C, where access to education, water and health services remained extremely constrained. Additional measures to facilitate Palestinian use of land and resources and the provision of basic services in Area C were critical in the following year.

## **VI. Challenges**

89. In the West Bank, despite the easing of some obstacles, movement and access continued to be restricted, as did the planning and permits process in Area C, while settlement expansion and demolitions of houses and livelihood assets have accelerated since September 2010.

90. Despite a number of positive developments in Gaza, the main features of the crisis remained unaddressed, including recurring violence by militants and Israeli military actions, continued closure, the lack of Palestinian unity within the framework of the Palestinian Authority and the commitments of the PLO. A further steady flow of approvals for United Nations work involving “dual-use” materials will be needed, particularly in the areas of housing, education, health, energy and water and sanitation. Donors that pledged funding at the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, in 2009, were encouraged to seek avenues for expenditure.

91. The Palestinian Authority continued to reduce its dependence on external donor assistance and had halved its reliance on donor assistance since the International Donors’ Conference for the Palestinian State, held in Paris in 2007. As a result, the Palestinian Authority deficit for recurrent spending, which is financed by donors, is expected to decline to less than \$1 billion in the 2011 budget. Continued and predictable support to the Palestinian Authority budget to finance the deficit was essential in order to ensure stability and support reform efforts.

## VII. Conclusions

92. The operational context for the United Nations in the reporting period improved. Despite economic growth registered across the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which was prompted by Palestinian and Israeli efforts, the overall socio-economic and political situation in the Territory remained challenging. Major challenges included high unemployment and food insecurity, the rise in violent attacks and casualties, and the continued closure and restrictions on the movement of people and goods. The United Nations will continue to work towards the realization of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 1397 (2002), 1515 (2003), 1850 (2008) and 1860 (2009), an end to the occupation that began in 1967 and the establishment of a sovereign, democratic, viable and contiguous Palestinian State, existing side by side in peace with a secure Israel.

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**Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance**

**Economic and Social Council  
Substantive session of 2012**

New York, 2-27 July 2012

Item 9 of the provisional agenda\*\*

**Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations**

## Assistance to the Palestinian people

### Report of the Secretary-General

#### *Summary*

The present report, submitted in compliance with General Assembly resolution 66/118, contains an assessment of the assistance received by the Palestinian people, needs still unmet and proposals for responding to them. This report describes efforts made by the United Nations, in cooperation with the Palestinian Authority, donors and civil society, to support the Palestinian population and institutions. The reporting period is from May 2011 to April 2012. During that period the Palestinian Authority completed its two-year State-building programme. The United Nations enhanced its support to those efforts through its Medium-Term Response Plan. The United Nations is currently executing \$1.2 billion of works under that plan and is seeking an additional \$1.7 billion for planned works. This complements the humanitarian programming outlined in the 2012 Consolidated Appeal of \$416.7 million, of which 38 per cent has been funded as of April 2012.

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\* A/67/50.

\*\* E/2012/100.



Despite some diplomatic progress between the Israelis and Palestinians in early 2012, the parties have been unable to resume negotiations. The absence of a political horizon that would match progress in the Palestinian State-building agenda remains a fundamental obstacle to further progress. Settlement activity, demolitions of Palestinian property, and displacement increased in 2011. Prospects for elections and for establishing a Palestinian unity government of technocrats remained uncertain, despite limited progress in the intra-Palestinian reconciliation process.

Significant economic growth was realized over the reporting period. It was primarily led by public expenditure in the West Bank and construction in Gaza. Trade sectors of the economy were most affected by the restrictions on movement and access and low levels of investment, especially in Gaza, bringing into question the sustainability of recent growth. Unemployment and food insecurity declined, but remained high, particularly in Gaza and Area C of the West Bank.

Over the reporting period, the United Nations intensified its efforts to respond to those and other challenges, focusing particularly on the areas where the Palestinian Authority was least able to extend its services: Gaza, and Area C and East Jerusalem of the West Bank. The United Nations worked at scale on reconstruction in Gaza, having received approval for US\$ 365 million of projects requiring material that needs to be approved by the Government of Israel. The Palestinian Authority-United Nations Trust Fund was used to channel US\$ 22 million for the construction of United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) schools and would serve as an appropriate channel for the United Nations recovery and development work throughout the occupied Palestinian territory.

## **I. Introduction**

1. The present report is submitted in compliance with General Assembly resolution 66/118, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it, at its sixty-seventh session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution, containing an assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people and of the needs still unmet, and specific proposals for responding effectively to them. Also included is a summary of key political developments and challenges relevant to the reporting period, as the international community continued to work to alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people, as well as to support the State-building efforts of the Palestinian Authority and negotiations between the parties. The reporting period is from May 2011 to April 2012.

2. Information on the living and socioeconomic conditions of the Palestinian people is provided in several reports prepared by other United Nations agencies, in particular: (a) the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan (to be issued); and (b) the annual report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) (A/66/13).

3. The humanitarian, economic and development needs of the Palestinian people are reflected in several documents. The Consolidated Appeals Process for 2012, with a narrower focus than in previous years, sought \$417 million to address the humanitarian needs by enhancing the protective environment and tackling food insecurity of the most vulnerable groups in the Gaza Strip, Area C, including the seam zones, and East Jerusalem. The United Nations Medium-Term Response Plan was revised in 2011, bringing it more closely in line with the Palestinian National Development Plan and strengthening linkages with the Consolidated Appeal. UNRWA programme goals for the period 2010-2015 were reflected in the Agency's medium-term strategy, which was estimated at \$675 million for 2010-2011, excluding emergency relief interventions. The Palestinian National Development Plan 2011-2013 outlined priority development needs in the amount of \$4 billion.

4. Throughout the year, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO) and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority continued its efforts to support the peace process and to ensure effective coordination among the Palestinian Authority, the United Nations, the international community and the Government of Israel. The Office also continued to document the economic and social conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory, and develop policies and programmes to improve them.

## **II. Overview of the current situation**

### **A. Political context**

5. The current framework for negotiations was provided by the Middle East Quartet in its statement of 23 September 2011. The Quartet called on both sides to

resume negotiations, submit proposals on territory and security within three months, and make “substantial progress” on those two issues within six months. After 15 months without direct talks, Israeli and Palestinian negotiators held several meetings, starting on 3 January 2012 in Amman under the auspices of King Abdullah II and Foreign Minister Nasser Judeh of Jordan. On 17 April, a senior Palestinian delegation met with the Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, in Jerusalem to deliver a letter from the President of the Palestinian Authority, Mahmoud Abbas, and a joint statement following the meeting noted the commitment of Israel and the Palestinian Authority to achieving peace. The United Nations has also continuously urged both sides to avoid provocations that would be detrimental to the prospects for peace.

6. On 23 September 2011, citing lack of movement in negotiations and continued Israeli settlement activity, President Abbas submitted to the Secretary-General an application for United Nations membership. The Secretary-General immediately transmitted the application to the Security Council. It remains under the consideration of the Security Council. On 31 October 2011, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) considered favourably a similar application and granted membership in the organization. Those steps were viewed negatively by Israel, and the Government of Israel withheld the Palestinian Authority’s tax revenue for several weeks. UNESCO funding has also been affected because of the withholding of the United States contribution.

7. The situation in Gaza remains fragile and of serious concern for the United Nations. The de facto Hamas authority remains in control of the Gaza Strip. The lifting of the closure in the context of Security Council resolution 1860 (2009) continues to be a fundamental objective of the United Nations.

8. The fragility of the calm in Gaza and southern Israel was repeatedly demonstrated by escalations in October and December 2011, with the largest escalation since operation “Cast Lead” taking place in March 2012. Militant groups continued indiscriminate firing of rockets, mortars and other munitions during those rounds of violence.

9. Israeli Sergeant First Class Gilad Shalit, held in Gaza without access since 25 June 2006, was released by Hamas on 18 October 2011, as part of an exchange agreement that included 1,027 Palestinian prisoners. UNSCO actively supported channels of dialogue throughout that period.

10. The continued Palestinian divide represents an important challenge. Palestinian factions concluded a reconciliation accord on 4 May in Cairo, which was brokered by Egypt. A follow-up agreement was reached in Doha on 6 February 2012 between President Abbas and Hamas leader Khaled Meshal that would have facilitated the formation of a transitional government and the holding of elections. Unfortunately, the process of reconciliation has not substantially advanced since the signing of those agreements.

11. While Palestinian State-building has continued to make considerable progress, this achievement is at increased risk. Progress was realized in improving the capacity of Palestinian institutions, inter alia of the security forces, which continued to provide law and order in Palestinian cities under the control of the Palestinian Authority. Palestinian institutions also continued to provide basic services, including addressing the needs of the most vulnerable members of Palestinian

society. The Ad Hoc Liaison Committee met on 21 March 2012 in Brussels. While the Committee reconfirmed the institutional readiness of the Palestinian Authority to assume the functions required of a future State, the primary concern of all members of the Committee was the dire financial situation of the Palestinian Authority. Committee members called upon donors to meet the \$1.1 billion financing requirement of the Palestinian Authority for 2012.

12. Israeli authorities have continued to advance settlement construction in the West Bank, especially in East Jerusalem. Seizure of land for settlement building and expansion has resulted in the further shrinking of space available for Palestinians to sustain their livelihoods and develop adequate housing, basic infrastructure, services and productive capacity for economic growth. Settler violence continues to be a serious concern and remains a source of friction in the West Bank. Israeli civilians have also been affected by violence in the West Bank. Settlement activity is illegal under international law, runs counter to Israel's commitments under the road map, and is not recognized by the international community. In this regard, the Quartet has repeatedly urged the parties to refrain from actions that prejudge the outcome of negotiations.

13. Despite initial movement in January, the inability of the parties to resume negotiations is deeply concerning. The absence of a political horizon that would match progress in the Palestinian State-building agenda remains the fundamental impediment to realizing a more meaningful change for Palestinians on the ground. Political progress is vital for securing a negotiated two-State solution which ends the occupation, ends the conflict and addresses all core issues.

## **B. Humanitarian and socioeconomic context**

### **Economic and fiscal developments**

14. The Government of President Abbas and Prime Minister Salam Fayyad continued to implement key economic and fiscal reforms. Net lending in 2011 was 43 per cent lower than in 2010.<sup>1</sup> Efforts to improve the collection of utility bills and other revenues have been strengthened.

15. Real growth of the gross domestic product (GDP) was estimated at 10.7 per cent for 2011. Real GDP per capita was \$1,614 in 2011 (in constant 2004 United States dollars), an increase of 7 per cent from 2010.<sup>2</sup> Unemployment rates dropped overall to 21 per cent in 2011, compared to 24 per cent in 2010. Growth and unemployment rates varied during the year, and between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. In the West Bank, unemployment remained at 17 per cent, while it declined from 38 per cent in 2010 to 29 per cent in the Gaza Strip.<sup>2</sup>

16. There has been relatively little expansion of the tradable sectors of the economy, which are the most affected by the restrictions on movement and access, bringing into question the sustainability of recent growth. Growth has been led by public expenditure in the West Bank and by the construction sector in Gaza.

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<sup>1</sup> See World Bank, "Stagnation or Revival? Palestinian Economic Prospects", Economic Monitoring Report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee (21 March 2012).

<sup>2</sup> Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics.

17. Concerns about the long-term prospects of the Palestinian economy continued to include the need for recovery of the private sector, reduction of dependency on foreign aid and public expenditure, diversification of the economy, access to natural resources and removal of access restrictions on people and goods.

### **Humanitarian and socioeconomic developments**

18. During the reporting period,<sup>3</sup> 99 Palestinians were killed (91 in Gaza, including 56 militants; 8 in the West Bank; overall, nine children and one woman) and 2,123 injured (471 in Gaza, including 58 militants; 1,652 in the West Bank; overall, 308 children and 119 women) by Israeli security forces, compared to 112 fatalities and 1,270 injuries during the previous period. In the West Bank, growing settler violence towards Palestinians resulted in one fatality, 145 injuries (including 24 women and 35 children), and damage to property. Four Israelis were killed, and 67 injured. Militants launched 889 rockets and mortar shells towards Israel, as compared with 828 in the previous period.

19. At the end of March 2012, 203 Palestinian children were in Israeli detention for alleged security violations.

20. Demolitions of housing and livelihood assets nearly doubled to 643 structures demolished in the reporting period, following a fourfold increase in the previous reporting period. As a result, 1,160 people were displaced, more than half of them children. In the Gaza Strip, household vulnerability to food insecurity was also aggravated by lack of access to agricultural land in the Buffer Zone and, for fishermen, restrictive limits to Gaza's fishing waters.

21. The level of food insecurity in the occupied Palestinian territory decreased from 33 per cent in 2010 to 27 per cent in 2011, with 44 per cent in Gaza and 17 per cent in Areas A and B of the West Bank. Food insecurity levels in Area C were 24 per cent.<sup>4</sup> Further reductions in poverty and improved food security can be achieved only with sustainable, inclusive economic growth and job creation, which require further easing of movement and access restrictions that still hinder private sector activity.<sup>5</sup>

### **Movement, humanitarian access and operational space**

22. Access to and movement of Palestinians between most Palestinian urban centres in the West Bank, excluding East Jerusalem, deteriorated during the reporting period. As of the drafting of this report, there were approximately 530 closure obstacles inside the West Bank, compared to 500 at the end of April 2011. Ongoing restrictions on Palestinian access to land, social services and economic opportunities in East Jerusalem and Area C hinder development efforts, resulting in deteriorating living conditions and increased vulnerability.

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<sup>3</sup> Figures cover the period from 1 May 2011 to 30 April 2012. Data collected by the United Nations.

<sup>4</sup> Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, World Food Programme, UNRWA and Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "2011 Socio-Economic and Food Security Survey Report" (April 2012).

<sup>5</sup> See UNSCO, "Palestinian State-building: an achievement at increased risk". Report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee (March 2012).



23. In Gaza, the additional restrictions on land and sea access put in place by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) in the wake of operation “Cast Lead” remained in place. The land along the barrier with Israel remained inaccessible to Gazans, with Israel citing security concerns to deny almost all access within 1,000 to 1,500 metres of the barrier. Thirty-five per cent of Gaza’s agricultural land and 85 per cent of the maritime space remained restricted, affecting 178,000 people.

24. United Nations operations encountered numerous restrictions and delays in reaching communities in the West Bank, impeding the delivery of humanitarian assistance to Palestinian refugees and residents. Access and operational space for staff of humanitarian agencies remained restricted. From May 2011 to March 2012, there were 501 reported incidents of delayed or denied access of United Nations staff at Israeli checkpoints. The majority of those incidents occurred as United Nations staff crossed the barrier on the Jerusalem periphery.

#### **Barrier**

25. Construction of the barrier continued in the north-west of the Bethlehem Governorate. The United Nations Register of Damage Caused by the Construction of the Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (UNRoD), established pursuant to General Assembly resolution ES-10/17, continued its outreach and claim intake activities. More than 26,000 claims and over 250,000 supporting documents were collected. Claim intake activities in the Tubas, Jenin and Tulkarm Governorates were completed and the work is nearly finalized in the Qalqiliya Governorate as of the drafting of this report. The team of claim intakers of UNRoD has commenced its work in the Salfit Governorate.

### **III. United Nations response**

26. The United Nations system provided substantial support in the framework of the Palestinian Authority National Development Plan and numerous multi-year national sector strategies. The United Nations extensive humanitarian programmes continued to provide essential assistance to Palestinians, particularly in Gaza, despite significant financial constraints.

#### **A. Human and social development**

27. The United Nations coordinated and delivered humanitarian assistance, including food assistance, to over 1 million people; water and sanitation assistance to over 1.5 million; and health and nutrition services to nearly 2.5 million people in the occupied Palestinian territory. The United Nations also continued to support the Palestinian Authority’s State-building agenda and the realization of the Millennium Development Goals in the occupied Palestinian territory through the United Nations Medium-Term Response Plan. The United Nations is engaged in over \$2.8 billion of ongoing and planned development programmes, of which \$1.1 billion is funded as of April 2012.

## **Education**

28. The United Nations provided extensive support in the area of education, from direct service provision to infrastructure and policy support. UNRWA provided free school education to over 270,000 students in 341 elementary and preparatory schools in Gaza and the West Bank. Two thirds of those schools operated on a double-shift system, including 94 per cent of UNRWA schools in Gaza, where even that measure proved insufficient to accommodate the student population. In 2010 and 2011, UNRWA created “rotating classes” in order to absorb student growth. It provided a remedial summer learning programme for over 40,000 students, 88 per cent of whom passed the examinations following the summer programme. The Palestinian Authority-United Nations Trust Fund provided \$22 million for the construction of UNRWA schools in Gaza.

29. The United Nations continued to provide extensive opportunities for vocational and non-formal education. UNRWA provided 1,923 youths from the West Bank and 1,560 from Gaza with technical vocational training. The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) support to the Palestinian Authority’s Ministry of Education and Higher Education under the Child-Friendly School Initiative focused on remedial learning programmes to around 13,000 children (50 per cent girls) to help them to improve their Arabic language and mathematics tests. The collaboration between the International Labour Organization (ILO) and UNRWA continued to provide short-term training and employment opportunities for 500 Gazans in the construction sector. UNESCO supported 29 vulnerable schools in the Access Restricted Area of Gaza by providing an integrated training and community development package, combining education and protection elements.

30. Nine United Nations agencies supported the Ministry of Education and Higher Education to develop an education response package to improve capacities for the development of inclusive and child-friendly programmes from early childhood to adolescence in 42 schools of the West Bank and Gaza.

31. The two-year support of ILO and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to the Ministries of Labour and Education continued to improve entrepreneurial skills through the roll-out and nationalization of the entrepreneurial education curriculum into vocational centres, industrial schools and technical colleges.

32. Nearly 10,000 children benefited from the Palestinian Science Festival organized across Gaza and the West Bank with UNESCO support. UNESCO also continued to provide support to the Commission for Developing the Teaching Profession in developing national professional standards. UNICEF supported in-service teacher training of around 1,124 teachers (50 per cent female) on child-centered learning. UNICEF support to the roll-out of the School Management Information System (SMIS) included cascade training for over 1,050 school staff in 297 schools.

33. The UNDP Deprived Families Economic Empowerment Programme continued to implement the Al Fakhoura Scholarship Programme for Gazan students. UNRWA provided approximately 200,000 children with daily school meals in Gaza. UN-Women and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education partnered to improve health and nutrition at 210 schools, benefiting 62,000 students. The

partnership also generated substantial income for women's groups and community-based organizations, which were contracted to provide food for the school canteens.

34. The World Food Programme (WFP), in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, provided locally produced date bars — partially produced in Gaza — to 75,000 children per month in the West Bank and to approximately 80,000 children per month in 145 governmental schools in the Gaza Strip. The transfer of 144 metric tons of date bars from Gaza to the West Bank for the Ministry's school feeding programme is the first transfer of goods since the start of the closure in June 2007.

35. In an event organized in September 2011, UNICEF highlighted impediments to accessing education in vulnerable Bedouin communities in Area C. UNDP, with assistance from UNSCO and the Office of the Quartet Representative, secured six construction permits for schools in Area C.

36. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) continued the Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools programme across the occupied Palestinian territory and cooperated with 26 new schools for the 2010-2011 school year, benefiting 780 new students.

## **Health**

37. The United Nations continued to provide technical advice and quality assurance, as well as the direct provision of health services. UNRWA continued to be a major provider of health-care services, operating 42 health facilities in Gaza and the West Bank, and 21 health points and five mobile clinics in the West Bank, employing over 2,000 staff. The number of consultations continued to increase, reaching approximately 6.2 million for adults and adolescents in 2011, placing greater demands on UNRWA's limited medical capacity.

38. The United Nations provided key technical assistance to the Ministry of Health. The World Health Organization (WHO) has commenced a project, in partnership with the Ministry and the Norwegian Public Health Institute, to establish a National Institute of Public Health. WHO also assisted the Ministry to implement a national strategy to prevent and manage non-communicable diseases, to carry out a survey of key risk factors for non-communicable diseases and to continue to develop community-based mental health services.

39. WHO is also working with the Ministry of Health and the East Jerusalem hospitals on quality improvement in service delivery. Two governmental hospitals were selected to implement the WHO Patient Safety Friendly Hospital Initiative. A second phase of a programme is under way to improve the quality of services at the six specialized medical facilities in East Jerusalem to Joint Commission international standards. A programme in Gaza is working to improve the quality and safety of childbirth care at the seven main public hospitals. WHO has also procured medical supplies and equipment to meet essential needs in the public health system in Gaza. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) supported four women's health centres in Hebron, and the Jabalia and Al Buraj refugee camps in Gaza.

40. UNFPA worked with the Ministry of Health to improve women's health through a study on maternal mortality and other operational research in this area, as well as a major survey on the health profile and needs of Palestinian youth; it

supported midwife training and in-service training of health providers, and addressed quality-of-care issues, both in the West Bank and Gaza.

41. The United Nations continued to focus on programming for infants and young children. Working jointly with the Ministry of Health and the National Breastfeeding Committee, UNICEF supported the implementation of the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative in three hospitals in Gaza and five in the West Bank, involving sensitization workshops for 107 policymakers and 200 technical health staff. In addition, 90 health professionals in Gaza were trained on breastfeeding counselling skills and in turn reached around 13,000 mothers through health-care facilities and postnatal home visits. UNICEF also supported the finalization of the Palestinian Code of Breast Milk Substitutes.

42. UNICEF's scaling up of the Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses strategy led to the introduction of relevant guidelines in all Ministry of Health primary health-care clinics, enhanced knowledge of 700 health-care personnel on their use, and a slight decrease in drug use.

43. UNICEF support to the Ministry of Health's expanded immunization programme focused on areas of lowest coverage during immunization week, maintaining the high immunization rates among the most vulnerable communities. In addition, UNICEF provided the Ministry with support for all in-country vaccine procurement and logistics, and that reduced delays in vaccination.

44. UNICEF continued to support the National Nutrition Surveillance System through calibrating all measurement tools, intensifying supportive supervisory visits covering all nutrition sentinel sites and building capacities of more than 250 nutrition sentinel site staff on growth-monitoring tools, data management and the use of the Maternal and Child Health Handbook.

45. Through the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, United Nations agencies are working with the Ministry of Health and the National AIDS Committee to support the development and implementation of a national strategy to address HIV prevention, treatment and care, and are also working with the Ministry on control of tuberculosis.

46. In addition to advisory and capacity-building support, the United Nations assessed and improved health infrastructure. UNFPA conducted an assessment of obstetric care facilities in Gaza, followed by a rehabilitation, re-equipment and capacity-building programme covering 5 maternity clinics and 25 primary health-care centres. UNICEF provided medical equipment and supplies to a new neonatal unit in Gaza.

### **Employment**

47. The Technical Advisory Unit at the Ministry of Labour, supported by UNDP and ILO, continues to assist in the implementation and monitoring of effective labour market policies. ILO and the Ministry of Labour signed an agreement for the revitalization of the Palestinian Employment and Social Protection Fund as part of efforts to boost job creation, private sector development and workers' rights. The Fund will provide a wide range of financial and non-financial services, including employment services, employment guarantee schemes, enterprise development support, capacity development of small and medium-size enterprises and employment-intensive public investment.

### **Targeted social protection**

48. UNRWA distributed 546,956 food parcels and around \$6 million in supplementary cash assistance to nearly 33,320 households through its social safety net programme. In addition, UNRWA provided a family income supplement to bridge the abject poverty gap for 10,441 individuals in the West Bank and 77,199 individuals in Gaza. A total of \$9,588,242 was distributed as family income supplement under the programme. Owing to funding constraints, UNRWA could distribute only 70 per cent of the value of the family income supplement in Gaza during the first round of 2012. WFP distributed food assistance (in-kind and voucher) via the Ministry of Social Affairs to 85,000 beneficiaries in the Gaza Strip and 115,000 in the West Bank as part of the Palestinian Authority Social Safety Net.

49. UN-Habitat started a \$7.6 million self-help reconstruction project aimed to re-house the 100 most vulnerable non-refugee families in the Gaza Strip whose houses were completely destroyed during the December 2008-January 2009 conflict, and develop essential basic community infrastructure.

50. ILO provided technical assistance to the newly established National Wage Committee and National Committee for Social Security, designed to propose a new minimum wage and devise a basic social security scheme, respectively.

51. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) trained 40 women in home hospitality, 10 young women artists, and 67 women artisans. As of the end of 2011, 17 new women's centres had been established, with the support of UN-Women, and they provide socioeconomic services to more than 1,800 women.

### **Culture**

52. Palestine was admitted as a full member of UNESCO in November 2011, and it subsequently ratified eight international conventions in the field of culture, which were deposited with the Director-General of UNESCO. On 8 March 2012, it also became a party to the World Heritage Convention, subsequently submitting an emergency nomination dossier for the "Church of the Nativity and the Pilgrimage Route" in Bethlehem.

53. UNESCO continued to lead a multi-agency programme on culture and development funded through the UNDP-Spain Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund. In May 2011, the UNESCO action undertaken in Battir for the safeguarding of millenary cultural landscapes was awarded the Melina Mercouri Prize. In April 2012, UNESCO and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency signed a significant agreement for the rehabilitation and revitalization of historic cultural heritage sites.

### **Food security and agriculture**

54. FAO supported more than 1,500 women and their associations to achieve improved economic conditions and food security through providing agricultural inputs, skills training and marketing support. It also provided technical support to the development of the Agriculture Sector, Strategy "Shared Vision" 2011-2013 Action Plan. The Action Plan includes 299 activities and projects with a robust gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation framework with concrete indicators

measuring gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment in each of the activities and projects.

55. FAO assisted over 12,900 households in the West Bank and Gaza to safeguard their assets and expand their livelihoods during the reporting period. Its interventions also focused on stimulating the potential of youth to build a vibrant, productive civil society, and on empowering women as agents of development in their homes and communities. FAO has been leading a multidisciplinary United Nations joint programme aimed at improving the quality of life and dignity of women and men in Jordan Valley communities. The programme benefits 13,140 individuals directly and 4,800 indirectly.

56. WFP supported the agriculture sector through the purchase of locally produced commodities, including 1,638 metric tons of milk, 600 metric tons of salt, and 400 metric tons of date bars. In addition, WFP used one milling factory in the West Bank and two in Gaza to produce a total of 18,346 metric tons of wheat flour.

#### **Human rights, women, children and youth**

57. The United Nations continued to mainstream human rights into its work and to provide technical assistance to strengthen the capacity of the Palestinian Authority on human rights. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) worked closely with the Palestinian Authority to strengthen its administrative capacity to be able to comply with international human rights standards, in particular the standards under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. OHCHR held workshops for Palestinian Authority officials regarding the obligations and reporting procedures under those conventions and additional workshops on monitoring human rights violations for non-governmental organization (NGO) partners.

58. The special needs of women, children and youth remained a focus for the United Nations. UNFPA supported the training of 350 women from municipalities, health centres, rehabilitation centres, NGOs and local communities on psychosocial support and mental health, gender-based violence, and human rights. UNFPA continued to support four community-based networks, through which more than 35,000 vulnerable women benefited from 2,100 outreach awareness sessions. Family Protection Units established within the Police Force in the West Bank were strengthened through the training of 250 police officers and 50 prosecutors from the Office of the Prosecutor General. More than 200 Imams and women preachers participated in child rights and protection awareness training, enabling them to advocate for child rights issues during Friday sermons and religious sessions in mosques. UN-Women also provided 64 local government authorities in 17 rural areas with training to support the mainstreaming of gender into local policies and programmes. UN-Habitat started construction of the King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz Technical and Vocational Training Centre for Underprivileged Women in Hebron.

59. UNRWA in Gaza organized Summer Games for over 200,000 children in Gaza for six weeks. Summer Games actively promoted gender equality in Gaza by offering girls a unique and safe space within which to engage in physical activity. Based on community demand, the 2011 Summer Games also incorporated games and activities to help children to learn English. In addition, 9,000 youths were given short-term employment as activity leaders.

60. The UNRWA Special Children Special Needs Initiative continued to support students who were identified as being in need of additional assistance by providing a comprehensive assessment system: physical, psychological and socioeconomic needs and detection of learning difficulties in order for those students to be referred to appropriate treatment. Out of 14,000 students identified as having special needs by joint medical and educational teams, approximately 12,000 were provided with comprehensive medical examinations, including referrals for hospitals, speech therapy and counselling.

61. UNICEF supported the Child Protection Networks led by the Ministry of Social Affairs, which provided emergency response and psychosocial support through 16 Emergency Psychosocial Teams and 21 Family Centres, reaching over 40,000 children and around 8,000 caregivers. As a result, at least 70 per cent of children and caregivers that were reached reported feeling better able to cope with difficult events.

62. UNICEF continued to lead the inter-agency working group for the monitoring and response mechanism on grave violations against children in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory in accordance with Security Council resolutions 1612 (2005) and 1882 (2009). Training-of-trainers workshops in the West Bank and Gaza resulted in strengthened monitoring, reporting and response capacity.

63. Together with NGOs and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, UNICEF continued to support 93 community-based organizations to offer quality adolescent-friendly activities. As a result, around 59,000 adolescents aged 10 to 18 participated in after-school remedial learning, recreational activities, life skills-based education, photography workshops and adolescent-led community initiatives. Almost half were girls who, without this programme, would have little or no access to activities outside the school. To ensure meeting the needs of the most vulnerable adolescents, around 75 per cent of the 93 Adolescent Friendly Spaces supported by UNICEF were located in vulnerable areas (Gaza, Area C, refugee camps and East Jerusalem). UNICEF, in partnership with the Ministry of Youth and Sports and UNFPA, initiated the process of developing National Minimum Standards for Youth and Adolescent Friendly Spaces, which will be used to improve the quality of after-school programmes and ensure that they meet the needs of adolescent girls and boys.

64. UNFPA supported a project to increase Palestinian youth participation in early recovery, improve their prospects for employment and reduce their social and economic marginalization. Until the end of the year, the project reached over 1,500 youths (49 per cent young women). A second phase is under way in 2011-2012.

65. ILO continued to support the legal clinic run by the Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions in raising awareness of Palestinian workers regarding applicable laws and associated rights when working in Israel.

66. Within the framework of the joint United Nations Programme on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, ILO assisted in the establishment of a National Committee for Women's Employment. In February 2012, the Cabinet endorsed the establishment of the Committee, which is developing a three-year plan to assist the Ministry of Labour and social partners in implementing specific measures to promote women's employment and their protection in the workplace. ILO initiated a partnership with the Islamic University of Gaza to implement a skills

training and job placement programme for unemployed women engineers in the construction sector.

### **Environment**

67. The United Nations strengthened efforts to protect the environment. In cooperation with local communities and the Ministry of Agriculture, FAO supported the rehabilitation and greening of around 2,500 dunums of rangeland in the southern part of the West Bank during 2011. Furthermore, in the framework of its efforts to improve water availability and rationalize water resources management, FAO established around 400 community and household-level rainwater harvesting cisterns, in addition to more than 50 Grey Waste Water Treatment Units serving farming and herding families and communities in the West Bank, especially in areas prone to water scarcity. ILO is currently supporting preparatory work and running necessary research for introducing green jobs through skills upgrading and green construction in Gaza under the Green Jobs Initiative.

68. In 2011, UNRWA received funding to build a new green school that will provide educational facilities for 800 students. The building relies only on renewable and free locally available resources instead of waterworks and energy grids.

## **B. United Nations system emergency assistance**

69. The 2012 Consolidated Appeals Process for the occupied Palestinian territory seeks \$417 million. It focuses on providing protection to the most vulnerable populations in Gaza, Area C and East Jerusalem and addressing food insecurity, which remains persistently high. The 2011 Consolidated Appeals Process received \$305 million of the \$537 million requested.

### **Emergency food support**

70. WFP supported about 665,000 vulnerable and food-insecure non-refugee Palestinians, 351,000 in the West Bank and 313,000 in Gaza. UNRWA provided emergency food aid to about 650,000 refugees in Gaza and 186,173 individuals in the West Bank. The joint assistance programme between UNRWA and WFP for 30,000 refugee and non-refugee Bedouin herders in the West Bank yielded results — food insecurity in this group dropped from 79 per cent to 55 per cent.

71. The WFP urban voucher project in the West Bank assisted 4,735 vulnerable households during the reporting period, providing a financial stimulus to the local economy. A similar project in Gaza targeted 2,335 households. In 2011, the voucher programme in the occupied Palestinian territory injected \$7,527,000 into the local economy, where nearly half the vouchers were redeemed to purchase dairy products.

### **Emergency income generation**

72. UNRWA provided temporary work opportunities to 56,031 beneficiaries to alleviate the impact of high unemployment and poverty rates, creating more than 3.3 million days of employment. In Gaza alone, an estimated \$22 million was injected into the local economy. UNFPA provided cash-for-work to over 1,000 youths for self-designed community improvement micro-initiatives. Despite the positive impact of the UNRWA Job Creation Programme, only 11 per cent of the



\$57 million required for the programme in Gaza was received. The number of active contracts is less than 25 per cent of its 2010 level.

### **Emergency health support**

73. WHO continued leading the Health and Nutrition Cluster, which provides essential humanitarian health and nutrition services to vulnerable communities in the West Bank and Gaza and builds local capacities for rapid response to new emergencies. The Cluster expanded its operations in 2011, delivering essential health and nutrition services to 2,120,077 Palestinians, or 85 per cent of the vulnerable populations identified by the Cluster.

74. In the West Bank, UNRWA mobilized the operation of five mobile clinic teams aimed at targeting approximately 13,000 patients per month, including the most vulnerable and isolated populations (mostly refugees) with difficult access to health services. UNRWA mobile health clinics include mental health counsellors and also coordinate closely with other mobile health service providers, including the Ministry of Health and NGOs.

75. To maintain sustainability of medicine provision to refugees in the West Bank, UNRWA worked with Palestinian pharmaceutical companies to successfully shorten the delivery time and maintain adequate stock for essential medicine. UNRWA also continued to help to facilitate delivery of pharmaceuticals to Gaza by aiding with the cold storage chain at the Central Pharmacy in Jerusalem for medicines procured for Gaza and delayed because of restrictive Israeli logistics, as well as making transfers of essential diabetic drugs to Gaza health clinics from Jerusalem.

76. WHO has been leading advocacy on the right to health, focusing, among other issues, on referral of patients out of Gaza for specialized care and on access to East Jerusalem hospitals. Far fewer patients had their permits to exit Gaza denied or delayed in 2011 — down from 40 per cent in 2006 to 6 per cent in 2011.

77. WHO continued to monitor shortages of drugs and disposables, fill the gaps in pharmaceutical supplies, and help to coordinate the import of medical supplies donated to Gaza. That entailed renting additional warehouses and helping to sort, register, store and deliver medical supplies, as well as disposing of expired or unusable medicines. The organization also provided spare parts and technical assistance to maintain, repair and improve existing equipment.

78. UNFPA supplied the Palestinian health system's needs for family planning commodities, and began the rehabilitation of 5 maternities and 24 primary health-care clinics in Gaza as well as related supplies, equipment and training.

### **Emergency water and sanitation support**

79. The UNICEF-led Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Cluster identified crucially vulnerable target areas and populations through the collation of partner agency assessments on the basis of agreed indicators; established a monitoring system using the harmonized database to track response and avoid overlap; enhanced advocacy concerning crucial issues; strengthened cluster partner capacity through trainings and workshops; and facilitated fundraising for critical humanitarian needs through the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and the Humanitarian Response Fund (HRF) funding mechanisms.

80. UNICEF humanitarian support in the WASH Cluster focused on providing protected and reliable access to sufficient safe water, sanitation and hygiene facilities. UNICEF supported the upgrading of the water network at Dhahiriya town by the Palestinian Water Authority, nearly doubling water availability for a total of 2,230 households. UNICEF supported the improvement of the Rafah sewage network, benefiting at completion approximately 17,000 people and reducing groundwater pollution. In collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, UNICEF supported the construction and rehabilitation of WASH facilities in 78 schools, providing access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene facilities for around 56,874 students and 1,809 teachers. Hygiene promotion activities benefited 5,200 students. Tankered water was provided to 216 schools in Gaza throughout the scholastic year 2010/2011, benefiting 124,529 children.

81. UNRWA Gaza supported water and sanitation service providers operating outside refugee camps to procure sufficient quantities of fuel and other supplies. Such interventions were critical owing to persisting electricity outages. In 2011, 1.66 million litres of fuel and solar oil were distributed to municipalities and Solid Waste Management Councils and the Coastal Municipal Water Utility to ensure the continuity of water and sanitation services and treat mosquito breeding sites. UNRWA supported some NGOs providing key social services with 34,500 litres of fuel for their generators and vehicles. Based on needs, it also provided municipalities with tools and spare parts to be used for sanitation purposes. In addition, UNRWA carried out a series of urgently needed works on water and sanitation networks within camps. In the West Bank, an estimated 154,518 refugees living in 13 camps in three areas (Hebron, Jerusalem and Nablus) benefited from the sanitation physical works in 2011.

#### **Emergency agriculture support**

82. FAO led and coordinated the response to the drought and water shortage affecting the livelihood of livestock-herding communities in the West Bank. FAO distributed more than 4,500 tons of animal fodder, seeds and seedlings of drought-tolerant fodder crops and shrubs, veterinary and animal health inputs and vaccines, benefiting around 2,000 herding families.

83. FAO supported the response to a major pest outbreak on date palm fields threatening all date palm plantations in Gaza. It continued to monitor vulnerability to climatic, economic and political shocks for small-scale farmers and herders in the occupied Palestinian territory, and to strengthen collaboration with the WASH Cluster, the monitoring system and response framework designed to result in a more coordinated humanitarian approach. FAO advocated for the economic security of those vulnerable communities.

### **C. United Nations system support to Palestinian institutions**

84. The United Nations maintained support to the Palestinian Authority's efforts to improve the collection of revenue and accelerate customs clearance procedures. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) renewed an ongoing collaboration with the Palestinian Customs Authority to modernize and strengthen its existing systems. UNCTAD initiated efforts to strengthen the economic modelling and forecasting capacity of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics.

85. UN-Women continued to support the Ministry of Women's Affairs in implementing the National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women, including through the formulation of memorandums of understanding that were signed with five line ministries. UN-Women commenced a programme to improve access to justice for women victims of violence and supported the Ministry of Social Affairs in developing an accreditation policy for anti-violence shelters, which was endorsed by the Cabinet in August 2011. UNRWA participated in the development of national protocols on gender-based violence through the UNRWA Family and Child Protection Programme.

86. WFP provided support to the Ministry of Social Affairs in the development of the Palestinian Authority Social Safety Net by using a single targeting mechanism.

87. ILO continues to support the Inspection Department of the Ministry of Labour through the development and implementation of a comprehensive capacity-building programme that is based on the Labour Inspection Strategy developed in 2011. ILO also supported national efforts for the promotion of social dialogue in the occupied Palestinian territory with a view to ensuring relevance and coherence of socioeconomic policies and fostering comprehensive and sustainable development. In August 2011, the Council of Ministers endorsed the establishment of a Palestinian Economic and Social Council, which ILO will serve as a technical adviser.

88. UNICEF continued to support legislation, policy and institutional advances towards a national framework enabling the strengthening of a protective environment for girls and boys. That included support to the Ministry of Social Affairs for the development of a National Child Protection Action Plan with a broad range of national and international partners. UNICEF supported broad reform at the Ministry of Social Affairs, resulting in improved harmonization and efficiency in work processes in addition to capacity-building activities for the Ministry's child protection professionals towards improved monitoring and reporting on cases of child abuse, and the efficient use of the referral protocol and electronic Child Protection database. UNICEF support to the Ministry included the finalization of the Justice for Children Law and its presentation by the Minister to the Cabinet for endorsement, together with a national planning process for the juvenile justice sector. UNICEF supported the evaluation of the non-violence in school policy pilot project for its roll-out at the national level.

89. UNFPA trained Palestinian Authority ministries on developing social indicators and on the use of data in national planning. UNFPA also supported the implementation of the first national migration survey. ILO is supporting the Ministry of Labour in the development of a revised labour law.

90. To further strengthen the National Monitoring System, UNICEF together with the respective ministries and in partnership with UNFPA, focused on the development of the national indicators on women, children and youth.

91. UNDP worked with the Palestinian Ministry of Justice to develop its institutional capacity and facilitate the improved delivery of justice. Focusing on legislative drafting, administration of justice and legal aid, the programme aimed at strengthening the Ministry's technical and operational capacity. UNDP established a working group comprised of Palestinian Government officials, civil society representatives and criminal law experts from the Arab world to provide advice on the development of a penal code. UNDP also introduced new courthouse case management software.

92. UN-Habitat provided technical support to the Ministry of Local Government in organizing the first Palestinian Urban Forum in Nabulus in March 2012, and to the Ministry of Public Works and Housing in the development of a housing strategy and policy for the occupied Palestinian territory.

#### **D. Private sector development**

93. UNRWA financed 14,600 loans valued at \$22.97 million for Palestinian microenterprises and households. Thirty per cent of loans went to women and a third went to youth. The programme continued to run at a profit by maintaining an operational self-sufficiency rate of 122 per cent.

#### **E. Coordination of United Nations assistance**

94. Under the auspices of the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, collaboration and coordination between the numerous donor and United Nations forums were strengthened during the reporting period. The Humanitarian Country Team met regularly to agree on humanitarian advocacy and response measures. The United Nations Country Team revised its Medium-Term Response Plan to ensure greater coherence with the Palestinian National Development Plan 2011-2013. Efforts to forge constructive partnerships between the United Nations, the Palestinian Authority and the broader aid community were strengthened. The United Nations continued the preparation of reports of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee on a semi-annual basis, and developed strategies and programming for East Jerusalem, Gaza, capacity development and the Consolidated Appeal for humanitarian action.

### **IV. Donor response to the crisis**

#### **Budgetary and fiscal support**

95. In 2011, the Palestinian Authority struggled to meet its financial obligations, as expenditures were mostly in line with the budget but revenue was less than projected, partly owing to lower-than-expected growth, and external financing fell short of the budget target. That led the Palestinian Authority to accumulate approximately \$540 million in arrears. The external financing requirement for 2012 is estimated at \$1.1 billion. Timely donor support to bridge this shortfall — combined with the uninterrupted flow of clearance revenue collected by Israel on behalf of the Palestinian Authority — will be essential to meeting the Palestinian Authority's financial obligations in the coming year.

#### **Donor coordination**

96. The Local Aid Coordination Structure continued to serve as a key forum for discussing and providing input to new sector strategies and the National Development Plan 2011-2013. The coordination of humanitarian advocacy and information, led by the Secretariat Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, also continued.

97. Two meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee were held. The Joint Liaison Committee, a tripartite coordination mechanism including the Government of Israel, the Palestinian Authority and representatives of the international community, also met twice.

## V. Unmet needs

98. The 2011 Consolidated Appeal requested a revised amount of \$537 million for critical humanitarian activities, of which 57 per cent was funded. The 2012 Consolidated Appeal requests \$417 million, of which 38 per cent was funded as of April. Additional support is also urgently needed for the UNRWA core budget, which faces a shortfall of \$70 million for 2012, as well as its 2012 Emergency Appeal for \$379 million, of which only \$55 million is currently funded. United Nations agencies are seeking \$1.7 billion to support planned multi-annual development interventions in the context of the United Nations Medium-Term Response Plan. This funding would complement the \$1.2 billion of ongoing United Nations recovery and development projects in Gaza and the West Bank. The Palestinian Authority-United Nations Trust Fund remains a viable mechanism for channelling support to the Medium-Term Response Plan.

## VI. Challenges

99. Restrictions on movement and access, demolitions of Palestinian infrastructure and associated displacement of Palestinians in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, increased. Furthermore, significant settlement activity continued to take place in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, heightening tension on the ground.

100. While the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory grew in 2011, further growth would require a revitalization of the private sector and a further easing of restrictions on movement and access.

101. The United Nations has received approval for works amounting to about \$365 million in Gaza involving material that requires the approval of the Government of Israel. Maintaining a flow of approvals remained essential in serving the needs of Gaza's population.

102. Despite sound fiscal policy on the part of the Palestinian Authority, continued and predictable support to the Palestinian Authority's budget is necessary to finance the current deficit and ensure stability of the ongoing reform efforts.

## VII. Conclusions

103. The operational context for the United Nations in the reporting period remained unchanged, while threats to the livelihoods of Palestinians, particularly demolitions in Area C and the continued closure of Gaza, continue to pose formidable obstacles to economic development. Despite economic improvements, persistently high unemployment and food insecurity in Gaza, the rise in demolitions and the continued closure and restrictions on the movement of people and goods hinder sustainable progress. The United Nations will continue to work towards the realization of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 1397 (2002), 1515 (2003), 1850 (2008) and 1860 (2009), an end to the occupation that began in 1967 and the establishment of a sovereign, democratic, viable and contiguous Palestinian State, existing side by side in peace with a secure Israel.



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Item 70 (b) of the preliminary list\*

**Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance**

**Economic and Social Council  
Substantive session of 2013**

Geneva, 1-26 July 2013

Item 9 of the provisional agenda\*\*

**Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations**

## Assistance to the Palestinian people

### Report of the Secretary-General

#### *Summary*

The present report, submitted in compliance with General Assembly resolution 67/86, contains an assessment of the assistance received by the Palestinian people, needs still unmet and proposals for responding to them. It describes efforts made by the United Nations, in cooperation with the Palestinian Authority, donors and civil society, to support the Palestinian population and institutions.

The reporting period is from May 2012 to April 2013. During this period, the Palestinian Authority continued to implement the National Development Plan for 2011-2013. The United Nations enhanced its support to those efforts through its Medium-Term Response Plan and its work with the Palestinian Authority to develop a United Nations Development Action Framework. The United Nations development programming includes capacity development, infrastructure and the provision of direct assistance and basic services. This work is focused on six strategic areas: (a) governance, human rights and rule of law; (b) education and culture; (c) livelihoods, food security and employment; (d) health care; (e) social protection; and (f) infrastructure, water and sanitation. The United Nations is engaged in over \$2.9 billion of ongoing and planned development programmes in the State of Palestine, of which \$1.2 billion was funded as at April 2012. This complements the humanitarian programming outlined in the 2013 Consolidated Appeals Process of \$401.6 million.

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\* A/68/50.

\*\* E/2013/100.



Direct negotiations between the Palestinian Authority and the Government of Israel remained elusive during the reporting period. Unemployment and food insecurity increased and restrictions to movement remained in place, hindering development efforts. Improved socioeconomic conditions can be achieved only with sustainable, inclusive economic growth and job creation which, in turn, require further easing of movement and land and sea access.

During the reporting period, the United Nations continued its efforts to respond to development and humanitarian challenges in the context of occupation, focusing particularly on areas where the Palestinian Authority was least able to extend its services, namely, Gaza, and Area C and East Jerusalem of the West Bank.

## I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted in compliance with General Assembly resolution 67/86, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it, at its sixty-eighth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution, containing an assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people and an assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them. Also included is a summary of key political developments and challenges relevant to the reporting period, as the international community continued to work to alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people, as well as to support the State-building efforts of the Palestinian Authority and negotiations between the parties. The reporting period is from May 2012 to April 2013.

2. Information on the living and socioeconomic conditions of the Palestinian people is provided in several reports prepared by other United Nations agencies, in particular: (a) the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan (to be issued); and (b) the annual report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) (A/67/13).

3. The humanitarian, economic and development needs of the Palestinian people are reflected in several documents. The Consolidated Appeals Process for 2013, with a narrower focus than in previous years, is seeking \$401.6 million to address the humanitarian needs by enhancing the protective environment and tackling food insecurity of the most vulnerable groups in the Gaza Strip, Area C, including the seam zone, and East Jerusalem. The United Nations Medium-Term Response Plan presents the United Nations strategic response to Palestinian development priorities for the period 2011-2013, in alignment with the current Palestinian National Development Plan. UNRWA programme goals for the period 2010-2015 were reflected in the Agency's medium-term strategy, which was estimated at \$655 million for 2011-2012, excluding emergency relief interventions. The Palestinian National Development Plan 2011-2013 outlined priority development needs amounting to \$2.468 billion.

4. Throughout the year, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority continued its efforts to support the peace process and to ensure effective coordination among the Palestinian Authority, the United Nations, the international community and the Government of Israel. The Office also continued to document the economic and social conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory and develop policies and programmes to improve them.



## II. Overview of the current situation

### A. Political context

5. Direct negotiations between the parties remain elusive. Quiet exchanges continued in an effort to create a conducive environment and return to talks. Following the Israeli elections on 22 January 2013, a new coalition Government was sworn in by the Knesset on 18 March 2013. In his first foreign trip of his second term, United States President Barack Obama visited Israel, the West Bank and Jordan from 20 to 23 March 2013. Secretary of State John Kerry returned to the region at the beginning of April for separate follow-up meetings with the Israeli and Palestinian leaders, both of whom reiterated their commitment to a negotiated two-State solution. The renewed engagement by the United States of America marks an important opening towards breaking the political deadlock. It also offers an opportunity to mobilize consensus in the region and beyond, including through the Quartet, in support of reinvigorating efforts towards a two-State solution.

6. On 29 November 2012, the General Assembly, in its resolution 67/19, accorded the State of Palestine the status of non-member observer State in the United Nations. On the same day, the Secretary-General stated that the vote underlined the urgency of a resumption of meaningful negotiations to ensure that an independent, sovereign, democratic, contiguous and viable State of Palestine lives side by side with a secure State of Israel.

7. Following the adoption of the resolution, the Government of Israel announced that it would approve new plans for settlement construction of thousands of housing units in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and that planning would proceed in the E-1 area of the West Bank. President Abbas stated that building in E-1, an area that is key for the contiguity of the West Bank, would cross what he described as a red line. Settler violence against Palestinians and their property, under the so-called price tag policy, as well as Palestinian attacks on Israelis in the West Bank continued to be of serious concern. Settlement activity is illegal under international law and runs counter to Israel's commitments under the road map. Israel should heed the calls of the international community to stop such activity.

8. Also following the adoption of General Assembly resolution 67/19, regular transfers of clearance revenue from Israel to the Palestinian Authority were disrupted, compounding its dire financial situation while facing a decrease in foreign aid, the failure of donor countries to fulfil their financial pledges and slowing economic activity in the State of Palestine. Delays resulted in the non-payment of Palestinian Authority employees, which triggered strikes and demonstrations. In addition to social unrest, the hunger strike by Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails and the death of two Palestinian prisoners under Israeli custody sparked a series of popular demonstrations and clashes with Israeli security forces in the West Bank, which resulted in the death of 11 Palestinian protesters between September 2012 and April 2013 and hundreds of injuries. On the occasion of Palestinian Prisoners' Day, 17 April, some 3,000 prisoners went on hunger strike for the day and demonstrations were held in main West Bank cities. The United Nations remains concerned about the conditions of the prisoners on protracted hunger strike. The Secretary-General has urged that a solution be reached without delay, including by addressing all unresolved issues included in the May 2012 agreement. Although the Palestinian Authority continued to make progress in its State-building agenda, including the

organization of local elections in the West Bank, the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee noted, at its meeting in Brussels on 19 March 2013, that such achievements might not be sustainable given the continued political impasse, the deteriorating reality on the ground, negative socioeconomic and security trends, and the dire fiscal situation of the Palestinian Authority.

9. In a related development of note, on 13 April, President Abbas accepted the resignation of Prime Minister Salam Fayyad, who is expected to continue carrying out his functions as caretaker until a new Prime Minister is announced. The United Nations recognized that Prime Minister Fayyad had had to contend with circumstances that kept constraining the success of the State-building agenda he led together with President Abbas which, in the absence of a credible political horizon, was at serious risk.

10. In Gaza and southern Israel, a dangerous escalation of violence occurred in November 2012. Eight days of fighting resulted in an estimated 158 Palestinians killed, including 103 civilians, and some 1,269 Palestinians reportedly injured, while 6 Israelis, including 4 civilians, were reported killed by Palestinian rocket fire and 224 Israelis were injured, the vast majority civilians. A bomb attack in Tel Aviv on 21 November injured 23 civilians, 3 of them severely. The Egyptian-brokered ceasefire “understanding” of 21 November allowed for one of the longest periods without projectiles being fired from Gaza in recent years and tangible easing of the closure. However, rockets fired from Gaza on 26 February, 21 March and 2 and 7 April 2013 resulted in Israel’s decision to rescind the extension of the fishing limit, bringing it back to 3 nautical miles from its original 6 nautical miles, and restricted travel by Palestinians and goods into and out of Gaza. In reaction to the shooting of rockets, Israel also closed the Kerem Shalom crossing from 8 to 11 April. Since 26 February, this crossing, which is the only passage for goods from Israel into Gaza, has been closed for 29 out of 56 days. International efforts continued, notably by Egypt, to solidify the calm, prevent the smuggling of weapons into Gaza, advance the lifting of the closure, and fully implement Security Council resolution 1860 (2009).

11. The full implementation of resolution 1860 (2009) also entails overcoming the Palestinian political divide in ways that can advance the potential for a two-State solution. Egypt continued to facilitate the implementation of previous agreements, and a meeting between President Abbas and Khaled Meshaal was held on 10 January 2013 in Cairo. One of the results of that meeting was that the Palestinian Central Elections Commission was authorized to register some 240,000 new electors in Gaza, for the first time since 2007. The Chairman of the Commission has since declared that it is technically prepared to organize any election, once so decided. Hamas and Fatah have resumed informal working-level meetings but discussions on the implementation of existing agreements have advanced only a little. On 2 April, Khaled Meshaal was re-elected head of the Hamas Political Bureau. A day earlier, President Abbas reiterated his position, in accordance with the agreement signed at Doha in February 2012 that he was prepared to lead a technical interim government, which should prepare for elections 90 days into its term. The United Nations continued to support efforts to promote reconciliation under the leadership of President Abbas through Egyptian auspices and within the framework of the commitments of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the positions of the Quartet, and the Arab Peace Initiative.

12. In spite of the lack of progress on negotiations, the renewed engagement by the United States and the stated commitments by the parties to the two-State solution allow for a glimmer of hope, provided that this renewed engagement is followed up with determination. The parties must now show the political will to cooperate, with concerted action by the international community, including through the Quartet, and with the support of key Arab, regional and other stakeholders. The Palestinians have a legitimate right to their own independent State and Israel has the right to live in peace and security with its neighbours. There is no substitute for negotiations and no viable alternative to the two-State solution, making the resumption of meaningful talks all the more urgent.

## **B. Humanitarian and socioeconomic context**

### **Economic and fiscal developments**

13. The Government of President Abbas and Prime Minister Fayyad continued to implement key economic and fiscal reforms. Total revenues were 6 per cent lower than budget, while total expenditures and net lending were 12 per cent higher than their forecasts in 2012. Consequently, the year-end recurrent deficit was 55 per cent above its budget.

14. Real growth in the gross domestic product (GDP) was estimated at 5.6 per cent in the West Bank and 6.6 per cent in the Gaza Strip in 2012.<sup>1</sup> This, however, reflected a slowdown in the economy since the real GDP was estimated at 10.7 per cent for 2011. Recent growth was driven by the services sector in the West Bank and by the construction sector in Gaza. There has not been enough growth in the productive sectors of the economy to be sustainable and absorb new entrants into the labour markets.

15. In this context, unemployment increased to 19 per cent in 2012 from 17.3 per cent in 2011 in the West Bank, and to 31 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2012, up from 28.7 per cent in 2011 in the Gaza Strip. Women and young people are particularly affected by the lack of jobs.<sup>2</sup> Palestine refugees are also affected, with a 2012 overall unemployment rate of 27.8 per cent compared with 19.8 per cent for the rest of the population.

16. Related to this absence of economic opportunities, poverty continues to affect large proportions of the population. A number of factors are also placing pressure on food security in the State of Palestine. The percentage of households facing food insecurity increased from 27 per cent in 2011 to 33.5 per cent in 2012 overall. Broken down by area, 57 per cent of households in Gaza and 19 per cent in the West Bank faced food insecurity in 2012<sup>3</sup>. In absolute terms, this translates into 1.5 million food-insecure Palestinians. The economic situation of the Palestinian Authority contributed to a deterioration in food security levels, reversing the

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<sup>1</sup> See Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "Preliminary Estimates of Quarterly National Accounts, Fourth Quarter, 2012" (March 2013), available from <http://www.pcbs.gov.ps>.

<sup>2</sup> See Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "Labour Force Survey (October-December 2012) Round (Q4/2012)", available from <http://www.pcbs.gov.ps>.

<sup>3</sup> Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, World Food Programme, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, forthcoming "2012 Socioeconomic and Food Security Survey Report".

improvement in food security gains witnessed in 2010 and 2011. Further reductions in poverty and improved food security can be achieved only with sustainable, inclusive economic growth and job creation which, in turn, require further easing of movement and access restrictions that currently hinder private sector activity.<sup>4</sup>

17. Given the limited size and purchasing power of the local market, the transfer of goods and services from Gaza to the West Bank and exports to Israel and beyond are key to expanding the State of Palestine's productive base, generating employment and reducing poverty. The tradable sectors of the economy, which are the most affected by the restrictions on movement and access, have shrunk over time, affecting the sustainability of any growth.

18. Concerns about the long-term prospects of the Palestinian economy continue to include the need for recovery of the private sector, a reduction in dependency on foreign aid, diversification of the economy, access to natural resources and removal of access restrictions on people and goods.

### **Humanitarian developments**

19. During the reporting period, 258 Palestinians were killed (244 in Gaza, including 111 militants; 14 in the West Bank; overall, 48 children and 17 women) and 5,492 were injured (1,722 in Gaza; 3,770 in the West Bank; overall, 864 children and 118 women) by Israeli security forces. The number of killed and injured represents a significant increase compared with 101 fatalities and 2,215 injuries during the previous period, mostly as a result of the conflict in Gaza in November 2012. In the West Bank, growing settler violence towards Palestinians resulted in 144 injuries (including 32 children and 15 women) and damage to property. A total of 7 Israelis (including 4 civilians) were killed and 405 were injured during the reporting period, compared with 11 Israelis killed and 91 injured during the previous reporting period.

20. As at the end of February 2013, 236 Palestinian children between the ages of 12 and 17 years (including 39 between the ages of 12 and 15 years) were in Israeli detention for alleged security violations. Moreover, the February 2013 report by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) entitled "Children in Israeli Military Detention: Observations and Recommendations" stated that the ill-treatment of children that come in contact with the military detention system appears to be widespread, systematic and institutionalized throughout the process, from the moment of arrest until the child's prosecution and eventual conviction and sentencing (see p. 1 of the report).

21. Demolitions of housing and livelihood assets continued. A total of 488 structures were demolished, displacing 714 persons, more than half of them children. A total of 3,327 persons have been affected by the demolitions of housing and livelihood assets.

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<sup>4</sup> Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, "Palestinian State-building: an achievement at increased risk", Ad Hoc Liaison Committee Meeting, Brussels, 21 March 2012.

### **Movement, humanitarian access and operational space**

22. Access to and movement of Palestinians between most Palestinian urban centres in the West Bank, excluding East Jerusalem, remained restricted. As at June 2012, there were approximately 542 closure obstacles inside the West Bank, 4 per cent more than in July 2011. Ongoing restrictions on Palestinian access to land, social services and economic opportunities in East Jerusalem and Area C hinder development efforts, resulting in deteriorating living conditions and increased vulnerability.

23. A number of easing measures implemented since mid-June 2012 at main checkpoints significantly reduced the time spent by some 15,000 Palestinians travelling to and from Jerusalem every day. However, more generally, access to the city by holders of West Bank identification cards continues to be restricted by the barrier, checkpoints and the permit system, whereby an entry permit issued by Israeli authorities that is often difficult to obtain is required.

24. As detailed in paragraph 10 above, in Gaza, there was a fluctuation in restrictions on land and sea access imposed by the Government of Israel following operation “Pillar of Defence” in November 2012.

25. Access and operational space for staff of humanitarian agencies remained restricted. From May 2012 to March 2013, there were 522 reported incidents of delayed or denied access of United Nations and non-governmental organization staff members at Israeli checkpoints. The majority of these incidents occurred as United Nations staff crossed the barrier on the Jerusalem periphery.

### **Barrier**

26. Construction of the barrier continued in the north-west of the Bethlehem Governorate. The United Nations Register of Damage Caused by the Construction of the Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory established pursuant to General Assembly resolution ES-10/17 of 24 January 2007 continued its outreach and claim intake activities. More than 36,000 claims and over 400,000 supporting documents were collected. Claim intake activities in the Tubas, Jenin, Tulkarm, Qalqiliya and Salfit Governorates were completed and the work is well-advanced in the Ramallah Governorate. Outreach and claim intake activities in the Hebron Governorate have also been initiated.

27. Approximately 150 Palestinian communities have land isolated between the barrier and the Green Line and are obliged to use a “prior coordination” mechanism or obtain “visitor” permits from Israeli authorities to access their land. There was an increase in the number of permits issued during the last olive harvest but authorities still rejected many applications citing “security reasons” or insufficient proof of “connection to the land”.

## **III. United Nations response**

28. The United Nations system provided its support within the framework of the Palestinian National Development Plan and has been working closely with the Palestinian Authority in developing the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for the State of Palestine, a strategic planning framework that will guide United Nations development programming between 2014 and 2016 and align with

the forthcoming 2014-2016 Palestinian National Development Plan. The Framework places the Palestinian people at the centre of development programming with the aim to enhance human security, thereby setting the foundation for human development objectives in a context of occupation.

29. The humanitarian system responded effectively to the hostilities in Gaza in November 2012, during which the United Nations and its partners continued working to ensure, to the extent possible, that people were able to continue receiving food, other assistance and access to essential services. Only a few days after the ceasefire, programmes resumed and a rapid assessment of the humanitarian consequences of the hostilities was conducted, on the basis of which responsive programming was undertaken.

## **A. Human and social development**

30. The vision of the United Nations for the State of Palestine is that all people can fully enjoy human rights, peace, prosperity, freedom and dignity in an independent and viable State of Palestine, living side by side with Israel in peace and security. United Nations agencies work to strengthen the capacity and resilience of people and institutions in government, civil society and the private sector, in pursuit of human security and sustainable human development for all people in the State of Palestine, within the framework of respect for the rule of law and human rights. The United Nations places special emphasis on furthering the State-building agenda and strengthening community resilience and steadfastness in the context of the ongoing occupation. The United Nations development programming includes capacity development, infrastructure and the provision of direct assistance and basic services. This work is focused on six strategic areas: (a) governance, human rights and rule of law; (b) education and culture; (c) livelihoods, food security and employment; (d) health care; (e) social protection; and (f) infrastructure, water and sanitation. The United Nations is engaged in over \$2.9 billion of ongoing and planned development programmes in the State of Palestine, an estimated \$1.2 billion of which was funded as at April 2012.

31. Illustrative examples of the types of assistance provided by the United Nations, are set out below.

### **Education**

32. In 2012, UNRWA provided free education to 276,052 registered refugee students enrolled in 345 elementary and preparatory schools across the West Bank and Gaza, with an average occupancy of 34 and 39 students per class respectively. In Gaza, 91 per cent of schools currently operate on a double-shift system while in the West Bank, only 6 per cent are temporarily on the double-shift system to accommodate new school construction.

33. Nine United Nations agencies supported the Ministry of Education through the “Education for All” package for inclusive and child-friendly education and early childhood development. Pilot schools (32 schools in the West Bank and 14 schools in Gaza) benefited from school-feeding and capacity development programmes. For the first time, the Ministry of Education opened preschool classrooms in eight of the pilot schools in the West Bank. UNICEF also continued to support the construction of preschool classrooms in Gaza.

34. The International Labour Organization (ILO) and UNRWA continued collaboration on a Gaza initiative whereby 335 over-age students<sup>5</sup> (86 girls and 249 boys) were enrolled in six-month training courses tailored to job market demands and culturally accessible jobs for women. The agencies organized six-month apprenticeship placements in a field relevant to the students who completed vocational training.

35. Within its child-friendly school approach, UNICEF supported the capacity development of education supervisors on active learning strategies and techniques and the training of 1,600 educators in active learning methods.

36. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Deprived Families Economic Empowerment Programme continued to implement the Al Fakhoura Scholarship Programme for Gazan students. UNDP also supported the construction of schools and worked towards assessing the education needs of the Palestinian population, drawing on poverty scoring and livelihood assessments under the Deprived Families Economic Empowerment Programme as well as community assessments carried out for the Community Resilience and Development Programme for Area C and East Jerusalem.

#### **Health care**

37. UNRWA continued to operate 42 health-care facilities, 21 health points and five mobile clinics in the West Bank, employing over 2,000 staff. Nearly 30,000 refugees in the West Bank received assistance for hospital-care costs. In Gaza, UNRWA operated 21 primary health-care centres, serving 1.2 million refugees. These also serve as one-stop centres to address gender-based violence, where clients access health care, psychosocial support and legal aid in one easily accessible location.

38. The World Health Organization (WHO), in collaboration with the Palestinian Ministry of Health, finalized the National Health Information System assessment and strategy. It also continued to support the establishment of a National Institute of Public Health to build core public health functions, including strengthening surveillance systems and registries, developing capacity in analysis of hospital health-care management, commissioning and conducting applied public health research, and increasing the effective use of data for setting health-care policies and priorities.

39. WHO also continued to support quality improvement in service delivery by conducting capacity development training for Ministry of Health staff. In Gaza, it continued to implement programmes to improve the quality and safety of childbirth care at the seven main public hospitals. WHO also continued to provide technical assistance to maintain the functioning of public health-care services and helped in coordinating the import of medical supplies to Gaza.

40. WHO continued its programme to support East Jerusalem hospitals, which serve as the main referral centres for tertiary care for Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza. It also continued to support the hospitals' efforts to achieve Joint

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<sup>5</sup> The term "over-age student" refers to students who are older than the typical age for their corresponding grade.

Commission International accreditation in 2013 and to institutionalize the East Jerusalem Hospitals Network.

41. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) supported the rehabilitation, equipping and capacity development of maternity and primary health-care centres in an effort to improve the quality of obstetric-care provision and reproductive health-care services at the secondary and primary levels. In addition, UNFPA continued to support the institutionalization of a maternal mortality surveillance system. UNICEF supported improved health-care services through mobile clinics in 29 communities in the Jordan Valley and Area C.

42. UNICEF supported the capacity-building of 259 doctors and nurses in health-care centres and emergency wards in the area of community-based integrated management of childhood illnesses. It also trained 200 health-care workers in the introduction of new vaccines and the updated national expanded programme for immunizations, maintaining high immunization rates among the most vulnerable communities. UNICEF also supported the post-natal home visits programme, which reached around 3,000 at-risk mothers and newborns, and referred those in need for specialized care at health-care facilities.

### **Employment**

43. UNDP started the second phase of the Deprived Families Economic Empowerment Programme, targeting 12,000 families living below the national poverty line. The first phase of the programme graduated 7,000 families from deep poverty and created 12,000 sustainable employment opportunities.

44. UNDP and ILO continued to support the Technical Advisory Unit at the Ministry of Labour in efforts to implement effective labour market policies.

45. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) continued a programme which provided income generation and self-employment opportunities in food processing and marketing for women in 41 women's centres. The programme directly benefited 536 women workers, and over 35,800 women benefited from the services provided at the centres. The activity also benefited more than 258 schools and over 100,000 schoolchildren who receive healthy and affordable snacks made by women from the community-based centres, contributing to improved health of the community.

### **Targeted social protection**

46. UNRWA distributed 140,569 food parcels and \$1.4 million in supplementary cash assistance to nearly 11,889 households through its special hardship cases programme in the West Bank. In Gaza, it distributed 426,161 food parcels to 21,626 households, along with \$6.7 million in cash assistance through the social safety net programme.

47. ILO provided technical assistance to the newly established National Wage Committee, which helped to secure approval of a minimum wage by the Palestinian Authority. It also continued its support to the establishment of an integrated social security system in the State of Palestine by providing assistance to tripartite stakeholders in the development of a social security system for the private sector.



## **Culture**

48. After yearly requests by the World Heritage Committee since 2010 for a technical mission of experts to examine the state of conservation of the Old City of Jerusalem and its walls, the Executive Board of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) reached an agreement on 23 April 2013 to send a mission of experts to Israel in mid-May 2013.

49. UNESCO continued to lead a multi-agency programme on culture and development funded through the UNDP-Spain Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund in the areas of cultural heritage norms and legislation, inventorying intangible heritage, conservation and planning for potential world heritage sites.

50. UNESCO also continued to support the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities to enable sound representation of Palestinian cultural and natural sites, particularly after the Church of the Nativity and the Pilgrimage Route in Bethlehem was the first Palestinian site to be inscribed on the World Heritage List in June 2012. It also continued to support the construction of the visitor's centre at the Tell Balata Archaeological Park in Nablus.

51. Through a partnership with the French Biblical and Archaeological School of Jerusalem and the Islamic University of Gaza, UNESCO is supporting construction efforts for the conservation of the archaeological site of Saint Hilarion Monastery/Tell Umm Amer, south of Gaza City.

## **Food security and agriculture**

52. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) supported roughly 1,000 women and 3,700 farmers and their associations to achieve improved economic conditions and food security through the provision of agricultural inputs, skills training and marketing support. FAO also assisted more than 3,800 male-headed households and 1,900 female-headed households in the West Bank and Gaza to safeguard their assets and expand their livelihoods. Its interventions also focused on empowering women as agents of development in their homes and communities.

53. UNDP, through its rural development programme, directly enhanced the productivity of at least 4,000 hectares of agricultural land and established services and infrastructure that encouraged farmers to cultivate and utilize an additional 7,000 hectares using private investments.

## **Human rights, women, children and youth**

54. The United Nations continued to mainstream human rights into all of its work and to provide technical assistance to strengthen the capacity of the Palestinian Authority in human rights. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) worked closely with the Palestinian Authority on the ongoing process of preparing a national action plan on human rights, which will be an integral part of the forthcoming National Development Plan. OHCHR also worked with the Palestinian Authority to strengthen its administrative capacity, with a view towards becoming a State party to the core international human rights conventions, in particular the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. OHCHR continued its work with the Independent Commission for Human Rights and with

non-governmental organization partners through capacity-building activities focused on monitoring human rights violations and advocacy skills.

55. WHO continued to lead advocacy efforts on the right to health, focus on, inter alia, access of referral patients to specialized care in East Jerusalem hospitals and outside the State of Palestine. Fewer Gazan patients had their permits to exit denied or delayed in 2012: 7.5 per cent in 2012, down from 10.2 per cent in 2011 and 40 per cent in 2006.

56. In late 2012, United Nations agencies organized a 16-day awareness-raising campaign to educate young people on gender-based violence. There were approximately 3,339 participants in UNRWA's campaign activities. More broadly, the UNRWA family and child protection programme reached more than 10,000 refugees in a wide variety of community-awareness and prevention activities. UNDP enhanced the national responses and capacities to address gender-based violence through the development and delivery of a training curriculum and by developing the capacities of 229 judges, lawyers, law students and prosecutors to deal with gender-based violence cases. UNFPA supported the development of a manual on gender-based violence with the Ministry of Health and increased the capacity of national health-care providers in managing gender-based violence cases. In addition, UNFPA built the capacity of community-based organizations to document violations relating to Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security.

57. UN-Women continued to support 49 women's centres across the West Bank and Gaza, including the building, rehabilitation and activation of 8 new community-based women's centres that offer a wide range of psychosocial, legal and social services. In Gaza, UN-Women, in collaboration with UNDP, supported the establishment and operation of the first comprehensive service centre for women victims of violence, the Hayat Centre, through which 125 women benefited from psychological, social and legal services.

58. Acting under the umbrella of the Ministry of Social Affairs, UN-Women continued to support the Mehwar Centre for the Protection and Empowerment of Women and Families, which hosted and protected a monthly average of 20 women and their children from violence and provided a range of social and legal services.

59. UN-Women worked with the Palestinian Bar Association to provide legal support and representation to women inmates in the Correction and Rehabilitation Centres and to women victims of violence and with the Correction and Rehabilitation Centre Department in developing and implementing rehabilitation activities for female inmates.

60. The young women leaders programme in Gaza implemented through the UNRWA Gender Initiative is aimed at closing a skills gap in the labour market by ensuring that women are developing skills demanded by the labour market through theoretical and practical training courses, work placement schemes and small- and medium-enterprise training. In 2012, 700 women received training under the programme.

61. UNICEF supported psychosocial emergency teams and family centres, which reached over 46,000 children (in addition to 20,112 parents and caregivers) to mitigate the effect of trauma and to alleviate psychosocial distress and strengthen resilience in the West Bank and Gaza.

62. With the support of UNICEF, UNDP and UNFPA, six non-governmental organization partners and the Higher Council of Palestinian Youth and Sport provided opportunities for over 31,200 adolescents to develop their capacities, skills and knowledge and provided psychosocial support through 56 safe spaces in the West Bank and Gaza.

#### **Environment, housing and urban development**

63. FAO, in cooperation with local communities and the Ministry of Agriculture, supported the rehabilitation and greening of roughly 2,000 dunums of rangeland in the southern West Bank in 2012.

64. UNDP provided support for adequate housing to nearly 80 low-income families through rehabilitation and renovation interventions in Jerusalem. In addition, UNDP provided support to improve the economic infrastructure by enhancing the physical situation of a number of shops and business facilities.

65. UNDP supported land protection and development in Area C, along with the Ministry of Agriculture, that served to establish infrastructure for cultivating land (roads, harvesting schemes, increased water storage capacities, reclaiming of unused land) and helped to protect thousands of hectares from confiscation and provide sustainable income to more than 8,000 rural families.

66. UNDP and FAO continued to improve access to and quality of water. FAO established more than 1,200 community and household-level rainwater harvesting cisterns to improve water availability and water rationing through resource management. UNDP continued to support the development of the wastewater sector and regenerate natural reserves in Gaza.

67. UNRWA in Gaza completed the first phase of the Saudi Arabia rehousing project, which included 752 new shelters for families who lost their homes owing to the conflict.

### **B. United Nations system emergency assistance**

68. The 2013 Consolidated Appeal Process for the State of Palestine is seeking \$401.6 million. This figure was increased from the \$374.3 million requested in the initial published Consolidated Appeal Process document to take into account the additional needs in Gaza arising from the escalation of hostilities in Gaza and southern Israel in November 2012. Humanitarian assistance under the Consolidated Appeal Process focuses on tackling entrenched levels of food insecurity, serious protection and human rights issues and the limited access of vulnerable Palestinian communities to essential services, particularly in Gaza, East Jerusalem, Area C of the West Bank and the seam zone. The 2013 Consolidated Appeal Process represents a reduction in requirements compared with the 2012 Process, which requested a revised amount of \$419.9 million. To date, the 2012 Consolidated Appeal Process has received 71 per cent (\$297.6 million) of its requested funds. In addition, the UNRWA Emergency Appeal is requesting \$300 million to meet the needs of some 2 million Palestine refugees in Gaza and the West Bank.

69. During and in the immediate aftermath of the November 2012 hostilities, the United Nations Mine Action Service undertook emergency risk assessments of all destroyed and damaged bridges, schools, family centres and key infrastructure

across Gaza and held risk-awareness campaigns concerning explosive remnants of war with partners. Between January and March 2013, the Mine Action Service supported demolitions of explosive remnants of war, destroying over 1,000 of them.

#### **Emergency food support**

70. UNRWA provided more than 21,865 individuals (3,163 households) with emergency food assistance in the West Bank. UNRWA and the World Food Programme (WFP) continued their joint assistance programme for refugee and non-refugee Bedouin herders in the West Bank, reaching at least 27,414 individuals (4,458 households) with four rounds of food rations during the reporting period.

71. In Gaza, UNRWA delivered an additional 526,382 emergency food aid parcels to nearly 140,000 refugee families, benefiting 748,040 abject or absolute poor individuals. UNRWA provided a total volume of 66,000 metric tons of staple food to the poorest refugees in 2012, including more than 48,000 metric tons of flour procured locally.

#### **Emergency income generation**

72. Across the West Bank and Gaza, the UNRWA job creation programme provided 29,991 refugees with job opportunities, creating 1.9 million job days of employment, injecting \$26,875,625 into food-insecure/food-vulnerable households and reaching a total of 188,531 beneficiaries (hired workers and their families).

#### **Emergency health support**

73. WHO continued to monitor shortages of drugs and disposables, led efforts to fill gaps in supplies and assisted in coordinating the import of medical supplies donated to Gaza. It also provided spare parts and technical assistance to maintain, repair and improve existing equipment and procured medical supplies and equipment to meet essential needs in the public health system in Gaza. WHO and partners provided emergency supplies of critical drugs and disposables needed for treatment of the injured during the escalation in hostilities in Gaza in November 2012. In addition, UNICEF delivered 43 lifesaving paediatric drugs and consumables to cover the needs of Ministry of Health primary health-care facilities for three to six months. It also procured 30 types of essential drugs for a caseload of 15,000 sick children.

74. In the West Bank, UNRWA operated six mobile clinic teams, which served 55 of the most remote or vulnerable communities with essential primary health care. The teams provided an average of more than 12,000 patient consultations a month and covered a population of approximately 120,000 refugees as well as non-refugees. The clinics are closely coordinated with other mobile health-care providers, including the Ministry of Health and non-governmental organizations.

75. UNRWA provided community mental health-care support to 49 vulnerable Bedouin communities in the West Bank, covering a population of approximately 10,500 individuals. The teams provided individual and group counselling, family support, psychosocial activities for men, women and children, and facilitated training programmes for community leaders.

### **Emergency water and sanitation support**

76. UNICEF supported water networks improvement, benefiting 300 families in underserved communities in the West Bank and resulting in decreased spending on water and increased access to water for 958 students.

77. In Gaza, in coordination with the Coastal Municipalities Water Utility, UNICEF supported the installation of four desalination units expected to provide access to desalinated water to 35,000 people.

78. In partnership with the Italian non-governmental organization Gruppo di Volontariato Civile (Civil Volunteers' Group) and the French non-governmental organization Action contre la faim, UNICEF's installation of water storage tanks and mobile latrines benefited 2,531 families (161 in Area C and 2,370 in the Access Restricted Area of Gaza). Over 1,100 people in access restricted areas have increased awareness on hygiene practices and cleaning household tanks. Around 390 male and female teachers in the access restricted areas benefited from training of trainers and were able to reach 5,000 students with lessons on good hygiene practices.

79. UNICEF supported the provision of emergency fuel to run generators, wells and pumping stations, benefiting at least 800,000 people in Gaza. In response to the Gaza crisis, UNICEF supported the repairs of 161 damaged generators and the rehabilitation of the water and wastewater networks in Gaza, benefiting at least 189,000 people, including 95,000 children.

80. UNRWA supported solid waste removal in 9 camps, provided public water infrastructure repairs and upgrades in 10 refugee camps and ensured water quality testing was undertaken in all 19 camps in the West Bank.

81. UNRWA supported water and sanitation service providers operating outside refugee camps to procure sufficient quantities of fuel and other supplies in Gaza. Such interventions were critical owing to persisting electricity outages. In 2012, 581,593 litres of fuel were distributed to municipalities, Solid Waste Management Councils and the Coastal Municipalities Water Utility to ensure the continuity of water and sanitation services and treat mosquito breeding sites.

### **Emergency agriculture support**

82. FAO distributed more than 2,200 tons of animal fodder, drought-tolerant seeds and shrubs, seedlings and vaccines, benefiting roughly 2,200 herding families in 2012, in order to protect the livelihoods of Palestinian farmers.

83. FAO continued to monitor the vulnerability of small-scale farmers to economic, political, and climatic shocks and to support appropriate responses. It provided 20,000 vaccines to vaccinate all cattle in Gaza and 85 traps for plant disease to farmers. In addition, training was provided to 10 agronomists and 250 farmers in order to build their capacity in identifying and responding to animal and plant diseases.

### **Emergency education support**

84. In response to the crisis in Gaza in November 2012, UNICEF continued to repair 94 damaged schools and provide learning materials. Mine risk education

materials were produced to raise the awareness of more than 273,000 children on unexploded ordnances through Government schools and community centres in Gaza.

85. UNICEF improved the learning environment for 53,000 children, including 20,929 girls, through the rehabilitation of 21 schools (7 in the West Bank and 14 in Gaza) and the provision of learning materials. Educational supplies were pre-positioned to respond to the needs of over 40,000 children. Over 3,000 children, including 1,434 girls, in the West Bank safely accessed school through UNICEF's support for the operation of school vehicles, including the provision of 12 new vehicles and protective accompaniment.

#### **Emergency housing support**

86. Between May 2012 and April 2013, UNRWA provided emergency assistance, including cash assistance, to 46 families (285 individuals) affected by house demolitions.

87. UNRWA provided assistance to refugees whose homes had been damaged or destroyed during the hostilities in November 2012. Over \$1.7 million in cash assistance was provided to 2,735 families (16,685 direct beneficiaries) for self-help minor repairs. In addition, 171 families received transitional cash assistance (over \$150,000) and will continue to receive this allowance designed to help families displaced from their homes. A total of 11 shelters were opened for a brief period of time.

### **C. United Nations system support to Palestinian institutions**

88. The United Nations maintained support to the Palestinian Authority's efforts to improve the collection of revenue and accelerate customs clearance procedures. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) renewed an ongoing collaboration with the Palestinian Customs Authority to modernize and strengthen its existing systems. UNCTAD initiated efforts to strengthen the economic modelling and forecasting capacity of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics is now officially using UNCTAD's macroeconometric model for forecasting.

89. The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) also continued its programme of support to enhance the operational capacity of the Palestinian Civil Police through training programmes, the provision of equipment, information management systems development and infrastructure development.

90. UN-Women and UNDP supported the adoption of the 2011-2019 National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women. UN-Women provided technical assistance to the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Justice to establish mechanisms and standards to expand access by women to justice and security sectors and protection services. UN-Women and UNDP worked with the Palestinian Civil Police and the Family Protection Units to develop their capacity in prevention and response to family violence and protection for victims.

91. ILO continued to support the Inspection Department of the Ministry of Labour through capacity-building programmes on occupational health and safety.

92. With ongoing support from UNICEF over the past few years, the amended Child Law was signed into force by President Abbas in December 2012; the amended law allows for additional protection to children and reinforces the legislative framework of front-line child protection professionals. A new law to protect children in conflict with the law and a child justice framework were also approved by the Cabinet. The “Policy of Nonviolence and Enhancing Discipline in Schools” was endorsed, with UNICEF support, overcoming significant challenges owing to the administrative divide between the West Bank and Gaza.

93. Support by the United Nations Mine Action Service to the Palestinian Authority included seeking modalities to begin the clearance of non-operational minefields in the West Bank. The Service contributed to the establishment of the Palestinian Mine Action Centre within the Ministry of the Interior, for which the Mine Action Service acts as technical advisor.

94. UN-Women, in collaboration with UNDP, assisted the Palestinian Ministry of Women’s Affairs in conducting capacity development activities for the staff of the Ministry and of the Gender Unit of 12 Palestinian ministries in legal literacy on international and national legal mechanisms to protect women’s rights in the State of Palestine.

95. UN-Women provided technical support for the protection of women against violence and the monitoring of human rights violations by enhancing the capacity of the Palestinian Ministry of Social Affairs in the adoption of international human rights standards. It also supported the establishment of an observatory on access to justice for women.

96. UN-Women provided technical support to various Palestinian ministries to ensure that gender was mainstreamed in budgets, development planning strategies and capacity-building activities to support monitoring, evaluation and reporting. UNDP also trained 314 local government staff in 15 districts on mainstreaming gender standards in district planning and budgeting.

#### **D. Private sector development**

97. UNRWA financed 14,500 loans valued at \$21.03 million to Palestinian businesses and households in 2012. Women and young people received 35 per cent and 33 per cent of these loans respectively. The programme in the State of Palestine continued to run on an operationally self-sufficient and sustainable basis and earned a net income of \$1 million from its microfinance operations.

#### **E. Coordination of United Nations assistance**

98. Under the auspices of the Deputy Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process/United Nations Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, collaboration and coordination among the numerous donor and United Nations forums was strengthened during the reporting period. The humanitarian country team in Jerusalem and the Operational Coordination Group in Gaza met regularly to agree on humanitarian advocacy and response measures. With the support of the Coordination Unit within UNSCO, the United Nations country team continued to coordinate its programming within the United

Nations Medium-Term Response Plan and began the development of the United Nations Development Action Framework in alignment with the Palestinian development priorities. Efforts to forge constructive partnerships among the United Nations, the Palestinian Authority and the broader aid community were strengthened. The United Nations continued preparation of Ad Hoc Liaison Committee reports on a biannual basis, strategies for East Jerusalem and Area C and, together with other humanitarian actors, the development of a Consolidated Appeal Process for humanitarian action.

## **IV. Donor response to the crisis**

### **Budgetary and fiscal support**

99. In 2012, the Palestinian Authority struggled to meet its financial obligations, since expenditures were higher than expected, revenue was less than projected, and external financing fell short of the budget target. This led the Palestinian Authority to accumulate approximately \$578 million in arrears to the private sector, the pension system and civil servant wages and to increase its stock of debt to domestic banks to \$1.4 billion by the end of 2012. The external financing requirement for 2013 is estimated at \$1.4 billion. Timely donor support to bridge this gap, combined with the transparent and unhindered flow of clearance revenues collected by Israel on behalf of the Palestinian Authority, will be essential to meeting financial obligations in the coming year.

### **Donor coordination**

100. The local aid coordination structure continued to serve as a key forum for donors and the Palestinian Authority. The coordination of humanitarian assistance and advocacy continued to be led by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat.

101. Two meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee were held during the reporting period, in New York on 23 September 2012 and in Brussels on 19 March 2013.

## **V. Unmet needs**

102. The 2012 Consolidated Appeal Process requested a revised amount of \$419.9 million to tackle the most urgent humanitarian needs, of which 71 per cent was funded. Despite the generous response from donors, funding was uneven across clusters with some funds arriving late in the year, thereby affecting the delivery of some of the most urgent programmes. The 2013 Consolidated Appeal Process is currently requesting \$401.6 million, of which 30 per cent was funded as at 4 April 2013 (including \$8.2 million received from the Central Emergency Response Fund). Except for the education sector, which has not received any funds to date, funding levels across clusters and sectors is fairly even. However, over half of the funds received are still waiting to be allocated to specific clusters and sectors.

103. Additional support is also urgently needed for the UNRWA core budget, which faces a shortfall of \$67.2 million for 2013, as well as its 2012 Emergency Appeal for \$300 million, which has a \$220 million shortfall.



104. United Nations agencies are seeking \$1.6 billion to support planned multi-annual development interventions, including the reconstruction of Gaza, in the context of the United Nations Medium-Term Response Plan. This funding would complement the \$1.2 billion of ongoing United Nations recovery and development projects in Gaza and the West Bank.

## **VI. Challenges**

105. During the reporting period, restrictions on movement and access, demolitions of Palestinian infrastructure and associated displacement of Palestinians in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, have all increased. Furthermore, significant settlement activity continues to take place in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, heightening tension on the ground. Economic growth will require a revitalization of the private sector and a further easing of restrictions on movement and access.

106. The United Nations received approval for an estimated \$77.4 million worth of United Nations projects by the Israeli authorities during the reporting period, including 449 housing units, 14 schools and 23 infrastructure and community development projects. This brings the total approved since March 2012 to \$400 million. During this same period, \$33 million worth of projects were rejected by Israeli authorities owing to the proposed location of the projects.

107. Continued and predictable support to the Palestinian Authority's budget is necessary to finance the current deficit and ensure stability of the ongoing reform efforts.

## **VII. Conclusions**

108. The challenging operational context for the work of the United Nations in the reporting period remained unchanged, while threats to the livelihoods of Palestinians, particularly demolitions in Area C and the continued restrictions and divisions of Gaza, continue to pose formidable obstacles to development in the State of Palestine. Despite modest improvements, persistently high unemployment and food insecurity in Gaza, the rise in demolitions, the continued closure and restrictions on the movement of people and goods all hinder sustainable progress. The United Nations will continue working towards the realization of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 1397 (2002), 1515 (2003), 1850 (2008) and 1860 (2009), an end to the occupation that began in 1967 and the establishment of a sovereign, democratic, viable and contiguous State of Palestine, existing side by side in peace with a secure Israel.

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Item 70 (b) of the preliminary list\*

**Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance**

**Economic and Social Council  
2014 session**

Item 12 of the provisional agenda\*\*

**Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations**

## Assistance to the Palestinian people

### Report of the Secretary-General

#### *Summary*

The present report, submitted in compliance with General Assembly resolution [68/100](#), contains an assessment of the assistance received by the Palestinian people, needs still unmet and proposals for responding to them. It describes efforts made by the United Nations, in cooperation with the Palestinian Authority, donors and civil society, to support the Palestinian population and institutions.

The reporting period is from May 2013 to April 2014. During this period, the Palestinian Authority continued to implement the Palestinian National Development Plan 2011-2013 and developed the Palestinian National Development Plan 2014-2016. In support of these efforts, the United Nations developed the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for the State of Palestine 2014-2016, which focuses on six priority areas: (a) economic empowerment, livelihoods, decent work and food security; (b) governance, rule of law, justice and human rights; (c) education; (d) health care; (e) social protection; and (f) urban development, natural resource management and infrastructure. The financial resources required for the assistance provided through the Framework amount to approximately \$1.2 billion. This complements the humanitarian programming outlined in the 2014 Strategic Response Plan for the occupied Palestinian territory, which has a total budget of \$390 million.

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\* [A/69/50](#).

\*\* [E/2014/1/Rev.1](#), annex II.



In July 2013, Israelis and Palestinians returned to direct final status negotiations, supported by extensive facilitation efforts led by the United States of America and assisted by the Quartet. The parties agreed on an agenda encompassing all core final status issues and on the goal of reaching a comprehensive agreement within nine months. However, despite the resumption of negotiations, the situation on the ground continued to deteriorate with increased settlement activity and violence in the West Bank and a deteriorating humanitarian situation in Gaza.

During the reporting period, the United Nations continued its efforts to respond to development and humanitarian challenges in the context of occupation, focusing particularly on areas where the Palestinian Authority was least able to extend its services, namely, Gaza, and Area C and East Jerusalem of the West Bank.

## I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted in compliance with General Assembly resolution 68/100, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it, at its sixty-ninth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution, containing an assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people and an assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them. Also included is a summary of key political developments and challenges relevant to the reporting period, as the international community continued to work to alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people, as well as to support the State-building efforts of the Palestinian Authority and negotiations between the parties. The reporting period is from May 2013 to April 2014.

2. Information on the living and socioeconomic conditions of the Palestinian people is provided in several reports prepared by other United Nations agencies, in particular: (a) the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan (to be issued); and (b) the annual report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) (A/68/13).

3. The humanitarian, economic and development needs of the Palestinian people are reflected in several complementary documents. The 2014 Consolidated Appeal Process, now called the 2014 strategic response plan, with a more targeted focus than in previous years, is seeking \$390 million to address the most urgent humanitarian needs by enhancing the protective environment and tackling the food insecurity of the most vulnerable groups throughout the occupied Palestinian territory. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework for the State of Palestine presents the United Nations strategic response to Palestinian development priorities for the period 2014-2016, in alignment with the current Palestinian National Development Plan. UNRWA programme goals for the period 2010-2015 were reflected in the Agency's medium-term strategy, which was estimated at \$639.4 million for 2013-2014, excluding emergency relief interventions. The Palestinian National Development Plan 2014-2016 outlined priority development needs amounting to roughly \$12 billion.

4. Throughout the year, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO) continued its efforts to support the peace process and to ensure effective coordination among the Palestinian Authority, the United Nations, the international community and the Government of Israel. The Office also continued to document the economic and social conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory, and to develop policies and programmes to improve them.

## II. Overview of the current situation

### A. Political context

5. In July 2013, for the first time since October 2010, Israelis and Palestinians returned to direct final status negotiations, supported by extensive facilitation efforts led by the United States of America. The parties agreed on an agenda encompassing all core final status issues and on the goal of reaching a comprehensive agreement within nine months. The Quartet welcomed the resumption of talks and reiterated its shared commitment to helping the parties to achieve a negotiated two-State solution within the agreed time frame. In accordance with the agreement, the first round of talks was held on 14 August, in Jerusalem, following the release of a first tranche of pre-Oslo Palestinian prisoners. The Secretary-General travelled to the State of Palestine, Israel and Jordan on 15 and 16 August to lend support to the process.

6. Dialogue intensified during the autumn of 2013, with some 17 rounds of talks. The repeated announcement of settlements with each release of prisoners, however, complicated the negotiation efforts. Since the beginning of 2014, such efforts have focused on articulating an agreed framework on all core issues as the guiding basis for continued negotiations towards a final status agreement. Secretary of State Kerry has pursued his shuttle diplomacy between the sides.

7. International support for the renewed peace talks, including through the Quartet and key Arab, regional and other stakeholders, has been steadfast. On 20 January 2014, at the Security Council open debate on the situation in the Middle East, the Secretary-General reiterated the need to help Israelis and Palestinians to draw back from a dangerous status quo, since the failure of political progress could fuel a downward spiral on the ground.

8. On 28 March 2014, citing a lack of political progress in the peace talks, Israel postponed its decision to follow through with the release of the fourth and final tranche of 30 pre-Oslo Palestinian prisoners. In response, on 1 April, and following the announcement on the same day of 708 reissued tenders for settlement units in Gilo, President Abbas announced that the Palestinian leadership had unanimously voted to join 15 international conventions and treaties. The accession instruments to 13 of those applications, including an optional protocol, were deposited with the Secretary-General on 2 April and all States concerned have since been informed through the circulation of depository notifications. Accession to the four Geneva Conventions of 1949 and an additional protocol came into effect retroactively. President Abbas nevertheless remained committed to continuing negotiations until 29 April. Despite continued meetings between the parties to overcome the impasse and to agree to an extension of the negotiating period on a different basis, on 24 April Israel suspended its participation in the talks in response to the announcement one day earlier of an intra-Palestinian unity agreement on the formation of a national consensus Government. Israel stated that it would not negotiate with any Palestinian Government backed by Hamas that does not recognize Israel's right to exist. The initial nine-month framework for negotiations lapsed on 29 April. At the time of writing, it remains unclear whether the parties will be able to find their way back to meaningful negotiations. In the meantime, the Secretary-General has appealed to both Israelis and Palestinians to exercise prudence and to avoid unilateral steps that would diminish the prospects for a negotiated final settlement.

9. The political impasse was compounded by a volatile situation on the ground with negative trends in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and a fragile calm in Gaza. Since mid-December 2013, clashes between Israeli forces, Israeli settlers and Palestinians have increased in frequency and intensity, particularly in and around refugee camps. Palestinian stone- and Molotov cocktail-throwing has also been on the rise and has resulted in some injuries and material damage. Settler attacks against Palestinians and their property, including attacks against orchards and one arson attack on a mosque, have also continued despite Israeli efforts to crack down on perpetrators of so-called price tag attacks. Palestinian security forces have continued working to maintain law and order in areas under their control in the West Bank.

10. The settlement restraint observed in the spring of 2013 has since been unravelling, including in East Jerusalem, with announcements relating to the approval of settlement units, including one relating to the approval of 24,000 units, since stopped, in November 2013. The United Nations position on the illegality of settlements remains firm. On 19 July, the European Commission, drawing on earlier Foreign Affairs Council conclusions, issued guidelines stipulating that it would only provide grants to and maintain relations with Israeli institutions within the 1967 line. The guidelines prescribe that any Israeli legal entity receiving funding from the European Union would have to state that it has no links to the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. In February 2014, plans to build over 2,000 new settlement units were announced. Demolitions of Palestinian property also continued. Tensions increased around the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif, including over visits of right-wing Israeli politicians to the compound and an inconclusive Knesset debate on 25 February on extending Israeli sovereignty over the holy site. The Secretary-General has reiterated the United Nations position that the status of the Old City and the religious sites within it are sensitive final status issues to be resolved only through negotiations and that the parties should refrain from attempts to establish facts on the ground and to alter the character of the Old City. The situation of Palestinians in Israeli administrative detention, some of whom undertook hunger strikes, has remained of grave concern. Palestinians also organized demonstrations in the West Bank and Gaza to express concern over the health of sick Palestinian prisoners in Israeli detention.

11. In Gaza, the calm has been eroding with several episodes of rocket fire into Israel, border incidents and dangerous escalations. During the summer of 2013, several measures were taken by Israel to relax the closure regime, including the extension of the fishing limit from 3 to 6 nautical miles. By the end of November 2013, i.e., one year after the ceasefire understanding, the situation in Gaza had once again deteriorated, with renewed violence and worsening socioeconomic conditions. Following the discovery in October of a tunnel extending into Israel built by Hamas, Israel suspended the import of construction material for international projects through the Kerem Shalom crossing. This decision has since been partly reversed for United Nations projects. Ongoing political and security developments in Egypt have also led to the continued closure of tunnels, the tackling of illegal smuggling and the frequent closure of the Rafah crossing. Between 11 and 13 March, more than 70 rockets and mortar shells were fired towards Israel. These incidents, responsibility for the majority of which was claimed by Palestinian Islamic Jihad, did not result in injuries or significant material damage. Israel conducted a number of air strikes into Gaza in March 2014, resulting in the death of five militants

reportedly affiliated with Palestinian Islamic Jihad and injuries to two Palestinian civilians, while an additional three civilians were injured by live fire from the Israel Defense Forces in the vicinity of the barrier. On 5 March, Israeli naval forces intercepted a ship in the Red Sea, allegedly transporting arms, including missiles, from the Islamic Republic Iran to the Gaza Strip.

12. The full implementation of Security Council resolution 1860 (2009), which entails overcoming the Palestinian political divide in ways that should advance the potential for a two-State solution, continues to represent the most viable option to stabilize and improve the situation in Gaza while addressing its structural problems. The unity agreement announced on 23 April provided for the formation of a Palestinian Government of national consensus within five weeks and the holding of presidential and legislative elections within six months thereafter. Addressing a Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Central Council meeting on 26 April, President Abbas reiterated that this agreement will be implemented under his leadership and on the basis of PLO commitments, which would hold the future Government of National Consensus to recognition of Israel, non-violence and adherence to previous agreements. He also emphasized that an agreement on this basis and continued peaceful negotiations should not be viewed as contradictory. The United Nations continues to believe that a unity agreement implemented on the terms described by President Abbas would constitute an opening that offers, at long last, the prospect of reuniting the West Bank and Gaza under one legitimate Palestinian Authority, including by holding long overdue elections.

## **B. Humanitarian and socioeconomic context**

### **Economic and fiscal developments**

13. The Palestinian Authority continued to implement key economic and fiscal reforms, yet fiscal consolidation progressed slowly in 2013. The fiscal strain is evident through continued arrears accumulation and high public debt. In 2013, total revenues were 8 per cent below budget, while total expenditures were 2 per cent above budget, with net lending reaching 357 per cent of the budgeted amount. This resulted in a total deficit of \$1.4 billion. In 2013, the Palestinian Authority received close to \$1.3 billion in direct budget support, a sum higher than projected.<sup>1</sup>

14. In February, the Palestinian Cabinet approved a \$4.2 billion budget for the coming year, reflecting a 9 per cent increase since 2013. The 2014 budget presents a current deficit of \$1.3 billion and development financing needs of \$0.3 billion.<sup>2</sup>

15. The weakening of real gross domestic product (GDP) growth in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in 2013 is of real concern. In 2013, unemployment stood at 18.6 per cent in the West Bank and increased to 32.6 per cent in the Gaza Strip.<sup>3</sup> Women and young people continue to be particularly affected by the lack of jobs.

16. Concerns about the long-term prospects of the Palestinian economy continued to include the need for enhanced private sector activity, particularly in the

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<sup>1</sup> Government of the State of Palestine, Ministry of Finance, Fiscal Operations: Revenues, Expenditures and Financing Sources Monthly Report, December 2013 (11 February 2014).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., March 2014 (16 April 2014).

<sup>3</sup> Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics; data available at [http://pcbs.gov.ps/Portal/\\_PCBS/Downloads/Book2049.pdf](http://pcbs.gov.ps/Portal/_PCBS/Downloads/Book2049.pdf).

productive sectors of the economy. This will require increased access to natural resources and the further relaxation of access restrictions on people and goods. It is estimated that the lifting of the restrictions on movement and access and other administrative obstacles to Palestinian investment and economic activity in Area C would result in potential additional output amounting to at least \$2.2 billion per annum in valued added terms, a sum equivalent to 23 per cent of Palestinian GDP in 2011.<sup>4</sup>

### **Humanitarian developments**

17. During the reporting period, 47 Palestinians were killed (19 in Gaza, including 10 militants; 28 in the West Bank; overall, 4 children and 1 woman) and 2,632 were injured (188 in Gaza; 2,444 in the West Bank; overall, 830 children and 77 women) by Israeli security forces.<sup>5</sup> In comparison, 258 fatalities and 5,492 injuries were reported during the previous period, mostly as a result of the conflict in Gaza in November 2012. Settler violence towards Palestinians resulted in 235 injuries (including 34 children and 11 women) in 83 incidents. In addition, an estimated 292 incidents against Palestinians led to damage to property, with at least 13,955 trees damaged. A total of 4 Israelis (including 2 civilians) were killed and 118 were injured during the reporting period, compared with 7 Israelis killed and 405 injured during the previous reporting period.

18. As at the end of December 2013, 154 boys between the ages of 14 and 17 were in Israeli detention for alleged security violations.

19. Between 1 May 2013 and 8 April 2014, a total of 663 housing and livelihood structures were demolished in Area C of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, displacing at least 1,120 persons, around half of them children. At least 2,320 additional persons were affected by the demolitions of housing and livelihood assets during the reporting period.

20. The latest socioeconomic and food security survey (2012) revealed a significant increase in food insecurity in the occupied Palestinian territory, from 27 per cent to 34 per cent, indicating that tackling food security remains a key humanitarian concern in the territory. In the West Bank, food insecurity levels reached 19 per cent and in Gaza, food insecurity levels reached an alarming 57 per cent.

### **Movement, humanitarian access and operational space**

21. Access to and movement of Palestinians between most Palestinian urban centres in the West Bank, excluding East Jerusalem, remained restricted during the reporting period. These ongoing restrictions on Palestinian access to land, social services and economic opportunities in East Jerusalem and Area C hinder development efforts, resulting in deteriorating living conditions and increased vulnerability. In Gaza, restrictions on land and sea access imposed by the Government of Israel remained in place.

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<sup>4</sup> World Bank, Area C and the future of the Palestinian economy, Report No. AUS2922. Available from <http://documents.worldbank.org>.

<sup>5</sup> Figures cover the period from 1 May 2013 to 7 April 2014. Data collected by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.



22. From May 2013 to March 2014, at least 300 incidents of delayed or denied access by United Nations and non-governmental organization (NGO) staff members were reported at Israeli checkpoints. Around half of these incidents occurred as United Nations staff crossed the barrier on the Jerusalem periphery.

#### **Barrier**

23. Construction of the barrier continued in the north-west of the Bethlehem Governorate in addition to rerouting works near Khirbet Jubara in Tulkarem as well as around Qalqiliya. The United Nations Register of Damage caused by the Construction of the Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory established pursuant to General Assembly resolution ES-10/17 of 24 January 2007 continued its outreach and claim intake activities. More than 42,000 claims and over 500,000 supporting documents were collected. Claim intake activities in the Tubas, Jenin, Tulkarem, Qalqiliya and Salfit Governorates were completed and the work in the Ramallah and Hebron Governorates is nearly finalized. Outreach and claim intake activities in the Bethlehem Governorate have also been initiated.

### **III. United Nations response**

24. In 2014, the United Nations and its partners, through the 2014 Strategic Response Plan for the occupied Palestinian territories, will continue to coordinate and deliver humanitarian and protection assistance, including food assistance, to 1.9 million vulnerable Palestinians, largely in Gaza, Area C of the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the seam zone. The humanitarian strategy, which replaces the Consolidated Appeal Process, takes into account and is aligned with the cycle of the longer-term development strategies, particularly the Palestinian National Development Plan 2014-2016, which in turn is supported by the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for the State of Palestine 2014-2016.

25. The United Nations system worked closely with the Palestinian Authority in developing the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for the State of Palestine, a strategic planning framework that guides United Nations development programming between 2014 and 2016 and is aligned with the Palestinian National Development Plan 2014-2016. The Framework places the Palestinian people at the centre of development programming with the aim of enhancing human security, thereby laying the foundation for human development objectives in a context of occupation. The United Nations, through its extensive humanitarian programming, continued to provide essential assistance to Palestinians.

#### **A. Human and social development**

26. The United Nations continued to coordinate and deliver humanitarian assistance, including food assistance, to over 1 million people; water and sanitation assistance to over 1.5 million people; and health and nutrition services to nearly 2.5 million people in the occupied Palestinian territory.

27. United Nations development programming focused on capacity development, infrastructure and the provision of direct assistance and basic services. This work is centred on six strategic areas: (a) economic empowerment, livelihoods, decent work

and food security; (b) governance, rule of law, justice and human rights; (c) education; (d) health care; (e) social protection; and (f) urban development, natural resource management and infrastructure, as outlined in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for the State of Palestine 2014-2016. The estimated financial resources required for the assistance provided through the Framework amount to \$1.2 billion for the period 2014-2016. At the time of writing, one third of this budget had been mobilized.

28. An important part of the United Nations development work in the State of Palestine is its activities in Gaza. Despite continued closures that still hamper operations, the United Nations implements a package of development works that are worth nearly \$450 million and that generate employment in the construction sector, one of the few dynamic sectors in Gaza. For example, through UNRWA construction projects, 4,000 full-time equivalent jobs were generated in 2013. Combined, these jobs represented 8.1 per cent of all employment in the Gaza Strip and contributed to reducing the unemployment rate in Gaza by 5.5 percentage points.

29. Illustrative examples of the types of assistance provided by the United Nations are set out below.

### **Education**

30. Nine United Nations agencies continued to support the implementation of the “Education for All” package for the State of Palestine, which is led by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education to address capacity-building needs in inclusive and child-friendly education and early childhood development.

31. These agencies supported the Ministry of Education and Higher Education in the opening of 44 preschool classrooms, 30 in the West Bank and 14 in Gaza, through the installation and equipment of 14 prefabricated units for preschool classrooms in Gaza and the provision of as well as technical support to the Ministry for the implementation of its new early childhood development strategy.

32. As part of the Education for All package, 70 pilot schools in the West Bank and Gaza (including 12 UNRWA schools) benefited from various education interventions, such as school-feeding programmes and capacity development programmes focusing on inclusive and child-friendly education, early childhood development and special educational needs.

33. The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) supported the capacity development of 21,094 teachers, principals and supervisors in the area of active learning strategies and the child-friendly school approach.

34. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) initiated support to vulnerable students through a new initiative that focuses on expanding access to resource materials and books through libraries and implementing a right to education advocacy strategy. It identified and equipped 12 libraries in the West Bank and Gaza with resources and trained 12 librarians.

35. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) continued to implement the Al Fakhoura Scholarship Programme for Gazan students.

36. The International Labour Organization (ILO) continued to promote entrepreneurship education and to support the nationalization of the entrepreneurial education curriculum in all vocational training centres, industrial schools and

technical colleges. Five training activities took place in Ramallah, Nablus and Hebron for key national facilitators of vocational training centres.

37. UNRWA provided free primary education to approximately 283,307 students enrolled in 344 elementary and preparatory schools across the West Bank and Gaza. In Gaza, 71 per cent of schools currently operate on a double-shift system while in the West Bank, only 5 per cent of schools are temporarily on the double-shift system, to accommodate new school construction. Owing to funding constraints, UNRWA was forced to suspend school feeding to students in Gaza attending classes in the 245 schools.

38. UNICEF, along with its national partners, supported safe and protected access for around 8,980 children (26 per cent of them girls) to schools at 19 different locations including checkpoints, gates and schools most vulnerable to settler violence and harassment by the Israel Defense Forces.

### **Health**

39. UNRWA continued to be a major provider of health-care services, operating 42 health-care facilities, 21 primary health-care centres, one hospital and one non-communicable disease referral centre in Gaza and the West Bank, employing over 2,000 staff. Annually, an average of 30,000 Palestine refugees in the West Bank received assistance for hospital-care costs.

40. In the West Bank, UNRWA operated six mobile clinic teams, which provided primary health-care services to 55 of the most remote or vulnerable communities. The teams provided an average of more than 12,000 patient consultations a month and covered a population of approximately 120,000 refugees and non-refugees.

41. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) completed a continuum of care project, which improved access to high-quality obstetric care for the most at-risk Gaza communities and expanded safe delivery services by establishing, rehabilitating and equipping key maternity and primary health-care centres. Moreover, it continued to work on strengthening family planning services by ensuring the availability of family planning commodities at all public service delivery points. Complementing these interventions, UNFPA reached 5,943 women with health promotion and awareness activities.

42. Through the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria, United Nations agencies continued to deliver life-saving drugs to patients through the Ministry of Health, both in Gaza and the West Bank.

43. UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO) supported the Ministry of Health in procuring polio vaccines and coordinated a national immunization campaign from which 639,481 children under the age of five benefited.

44. UNICEF supported the provision and rehabilitation of equipment for at least eight neonatal intensive care units and trained health professionals on neonatal guidelines. Data from one of the targeted hospitals in Gaza showed a decrease in the neonatal mortality rate and in premature deaths. In addition, UNICEF supported the provision of equipment for maternity wards in two hospitals in the West Bank, which resulted in improved paediatric health services for 17,000 children and obstetric health services for 12,000 women.

45. UNICEF continued to implement the baby-friendly hospital initiative in nine hospitals and 45 health facilities in the West Bank and three hospitals in Gaza and reached 4,610 mothers and newborns through the postnatal home visits programme.

46. Approximately 3,500 Palestine refugees received individual psychosocial counselling services from the UNRWA West Bank community mental health programme in 2013. UNICEF scaled up its psychosocial programmes implemented in family centres in Gaza through five psychosocial emergency teams and through the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, reaching approximately 150,000 children, half of them girls (of whom 37,145 were adolescents), with professional psychosocial support services that helped to increase their resilience and coping mechanisms. These services included group counselling, individual counselling, emergency home visits, life skills, educational support and recreational activities. In addition, a total of 17,986 caregivers (35 per cent of them men) were reached through awareness-raising activities designed to improve parents' knowledge and skills regarding how to protect their children and provide better support to them, especially at times of crisis.

### **Water and sanitation**

47. In the West Bank, UNICEF supported water quality monitoring of cisterns benefiting 570 families and implemented the water and sanitation in schools programme, which involves the construction and rehabilitation of water, sanitation and hygiene facilities in 55 schools. Once completed, the programme will benefit more than 80,000 students.

48. UNICEF supported the Palestinian Water Authority and the Coastal Municipalities Water Utility in the initiation of the construction and installation of a short-term low-volume seawater desalination plant in Gaza.

### **Employment**

49. ILO implemented a programme to support livelihoods and job opportunities in the fishery sector in Gaza. Using participatory value chain analysis and a series of training activities that were adapted to the needs of individuals, groups and associations in the sector, the project facilitated the development of a Gaza sector recovery plan while also fostering dialogue among stakeholders in various sectors.

50. United Nations agencies continued to support income-generation and self-employment opportunities for vulnerable Palestinians. UNDP targeted around 4,000 families across the West Bank and Gaza and focused on income-generating activities in microenterprise and small enterprise development, housing, education, health and rehabilitation. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), through 41 women's centres, focused on job opportunities in food processing and marketing. The programme directly benefited 536 women workers and over 35,800 women benefited from the services provided at the centres. Through the programme, 23 women's centres have reached financial sustainability. The activity also benefited more than 258 schools and over 100,000 schoolchildren who receive healthy and affordable snacks made by women from the community-based centres. Moreover, 800 Palestine refugee women were trained through the young women leaders programme implemented by UNRWA in Gaza. The programme aims to close a skills gap in the labour market by ensuring that women are developing skills demanded by the labour market through theoretical and

practical training courses, work placement schemes and small- and medium-enterprise training. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) supported 19 women's cooperatives and their members in achieving improved economic conditions through training to strengthen their marketing skills and the provision of tools to improve the marketability of their products.

51. On 1 December 2013, the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) delivered and installed a new high-tech gantry container scanner at the Kerem Shalom crossing.

### **Targeted social protection**

52. In Gaza, UNRWA distributed 426,221 food parcels to 21,638 Palestine refugee households, but was forced to suspend cash assistance owing to budgetary constraints. It also distributed 101,970 food parcels and \$1.1 million in supplementary cash assistance to 11,358 Palestine refugee households through its social safety net and special hardship cases programmes in the West Bank. The World Food Programme (WFP) continued to support the Palestinian Authority's social safety net programme. In 2014, it reached 214,230 people in the State of Palestine through the programme with general food distribution and food vouchers.

### **Culture**

53. UNESCO continued its cultural conservation activities across the West Bank and Gaza. It provided financial and technical assistance for the Riwaya Museum in Bethlehem and continued excavations, research, public awareness and the construction of the visitor's centre at the Tell Balata Archaeological Park in Nablus. In Gaza, emergency conservation activities at the archaeological site of Saint Hilarion Monastery/Tell Umm Amer continued through a partnership with the French Biblical and Archaeological School of Jerusalem and the Islamic University of Gaza.

54. UNESCO also continued its project to build local capacity in cultural heritage preservation in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The project enhanced conservation skills and knowledge with an emphasis on young architects and workers, promoted cultural tourism, raised public awareness of the values of the cultural heritage, introduced the socioeconomic aspect of cultural heritage preservation by creating job opportunities and provided facilities for public use. Through the project, six buildings and spaces were renovated.

### **Food security and agriculture**

55. Through the agriculture sector revitalization activities of FAO, 350 farmers received intensive training on integrated pest management, global good agricultural practices certification, integrated crop management and integrated plant protection.

56. UNDP finalized the development of an additional 2,400 dunums<sup>6</sup> for poor farmers in areas of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, that are in direct proximity to Israeli settlements or in the seam zones, bringing the total reclaimed land to approximately 12,000 dunums in 2013. It also supported land development

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<sup>6</sup> A dunum is equivalent to 1,000 square meters or 0.1 hectares (i.e., 10 dunums equals 1 hectare).

activities to ensure the sustainable use of land, primarily for olives, stone fruits and other seasonal field crops.

### **Human rights, women, children and youth**

57. Five United Nations agencies launched a joint programme to strengthen respect for the human rights of persons with disabilities through legislation, in compliance with the Palestinian Disability Law and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and to mainstream considerations for persons with disabilities in schools and employment services. This will be achieved through a close partnership between Government ministries, United Nations agencies, organizations for persons with disabilities and other key stakeholders.

58. United Nations agencies continued to support the special needs of women, including by addressing gender-based violence. UN-Women established 49 women's centres for survivors of gender-based violence and eight community-based women's centres that also served as shelters. More than 300 women benefited from psychosocial, social and legal counselling services at the first multipurpose anti-violence centre in Gaza and a monthly average of 20 women benefited from protection, sheltering and legal and psychosocial counselling at the Mehwar Centre for the Protection and Empowerment of Women and Families in the West Bank. UNRWA reached nearly 10,000 Palestine refugees in community-awareness and prevention activities relating to gender-based violence, children's and human rights, domestic violence, neglect and sexual abuse.

59. United Nations agencies continued to improve the quality and provision of legal services for women. UN-Women trained 20 lawyers in integrating gender perspectives into their litigation and 18 women inmates in Palestinian detention centres benefited from legal counsel and representation as well as rehabilitation activities. UNDP provided legal awareness sessions to over 1,890 people (1200 in Gaza and 693 in the West Bank) and legal aid, including advice and representation, in over 1,000 cases (350 in Gaza and 741 in the West Bank), mostly focusing on providing assistance to women. During the three years of this programme, more than 45,000 women were provided with legal aid services.

60. UNESCO provided training to female journalists in Gaza and the West Bank, in recognition of their unique role as defenders of human rights and providers of information. Training focused on personal safety, risk assessment, conflict management and freedom of expression.

61. In partnership with the Higher Council of Palestinian Youth and Sport and NGO partners, United Nations agencies reached 10,000 adolescents (50 per cent of them girls), who participated in and benefited from community youth-led initiatives aimed at fostering their civic participation and strengthening their life and employability skills, thereby reducing their marginalization. Furthermore, UNFPA and its national partners launched the Youth Peer Education Network (Y-PEER) as part of the global Y-PEER.

62. UNICEF continued to lead the inter-agency working group for the monitoring and reporting of grave violations against children in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory in accordance with Security Council resolutions [1612 \(2005\)](#) and [1882 \(2009\)](#). The working group's database enabled partners to document incidents of grave violations affecting children and to produce detailed analysis of

the type of military or armed group activity or settler violence affecting the functioning of schools. School teachers and principals in 186 schools in vulnerable areas affected by conflict were trained in documenting education-related violations, resulting in improved reporting accuracy.

#### **Environment, housing and urban development**

63. FAO supported efforts to develop natural resources through the rehabilitation of 1,000 dunums of grazing land and the distribution of over 350 ton of drought-tolerant seeds and shrubs.

64. UNDP provided support for adequate housing to nearly 80 low-income families through rehabilitation and renovation interventions in Jerusalem. In addition, it provided support to improve the economic infrastructure by enhancing the physical situation of seven shops and businesses in the Old City of Jerusalem, including three bakeries, one olive press, one hostel and two shops.

65. In Gaza, the United Nations Mine Action Service substantially reduced the threat posed by explosive hazards through improved protection works. As a result, all unexploded ordnance was moved from urban areas to the pre-demolition store established outside Gaza City and 8.5 tons of explosive hazards from both sides to the conflict were destroyed.

### **B. United Nations system emergency assistance**

66. The 2014 strategic response plan for the occupied Palestinian territory is seeking \$390 million, similar to the level of funding requested by the 2013 Consolidated Appeal Process for the occupied Palestinian territory. The 2013 Consolidated Appeal Process has received 66 per cent (\$265 million) of the requested \$401 million in funds. While humanitarian needs have increased, the level of funding requested by the 2014 strategic response plan represents a more targeted approach to address the most urgent needs and improve the distinction between humanitarian and development assistance. As with previous years, the 2014 strategic response plan maintains a focus on tackling entrenched levels of food insecurity, serious protection and human rights issues and the limited access of vulnerable Palestinian communities to essential services, particularly in Gaza, East Jerusalem, Area C of the West Bank and the seam zone.

67. In addition, the UNRWA Emergency Appeal for 2014 is requesting \$300 million to meet the needs of some 2 million Palestine refugees in Gaza and the West Bank. Most of the funding requested and received in 2013 was for emergency programmes in Gaza; of the \$245 million requested, \$115 million was received. In the West Bank, of the \$55 million requested, nearly \$29 million was received and allocated to emergency programmes.

68. The energy situation in the Gaza Strip remains extremely fragile. During the reporting period, the United Nations, with contributions from Turkey and the Islamic Development Bank, put in place a safety net to replenish the on-site reserves of a number of critical energy facilities. Nevertheless, the current situation highlights the need to find a structural solution to Gaza's energy problems.

### **Emergency food support**

69. In Gaza, UNRWA delivered an additional 530,000 emergency food aid parcels to nearly 140,000 Palestine refugee families, benefiting 748,040 individuals living in abject or absolute poverty. UNRWA and WFP continued their joint assistance programme for marginalized Bedouins and herders, both refugee and non-refugee, in the West Bank, reaching 30,507 individuals with food distributions. In response to Winter Storm Alexa in December 2013, WFP distributed ready-to-eat food to about 10,000 people residing in shelters in Gaza and distributed food to 1,000 individuals and food vouchers to 250 individuals in the West Bank.

### **Emergency income generation**

70. During the reporting period, the UNRWA job creation programme provided 40,285 refugees with job opportunities in 19 Palestine refugee camps and over 350 cities and villages throughout the West Bank, injecting \$16,726,647 into food-insecure/food-vulnerable households and reaching a total of 115,733 beneficiaries (hired workers and their families).

### **Emergency health support**

71. The UNRWA emergency health programme in the West Bank supported 25 primary health-care centres located in protection incident-prone locations, serving an estimated 270,000 Palestine refugees. In 2013 a total of 218,087 patient consultations were provided, of which 56 per cent benefited women. UNRWA, through individual and group counselling, family support and psychosocial activities for communities facing protection threats, provided psychosocial services to 49 Bedouin communities in the West Bank, serving an estimated population of 10,500 Palestine refugees. This included communities located in military zones, communities living in close proximity to settlements and communities threatened with demolition orders or facing severe access and movement restrictions.

72. WHO continued its support aimed at reducing shortages in life-saving drugs and medical disposables. Furthermore, it assisted in filling a number of gaps in the supply of pharmaceuticals and continued to help to coordinate the import of medical supplies donated to the Gaza Strip. It also provided urgently needed technical assistance, medical equipment and spare parts to maintain, repair and improve existing equipment, including generators and medical equipment damaged, as a result of the unstable power supply and frequent blackouts due to fuel shortages. UNICEF, meanwhile, provided life-saving paediatric drugs and consumables to cover needs in Gaza for three to six months as acute shortages worsened as a result of the limited opening hours of the Rafah crossing.

### **Emergency water and sanitation support**

73. UNRWA supported water, sanitation and health service providers operating inside and outside the Palestine refugee camps in Gaza in procuring fuel and other supplies needed for critical operations and managed solid waste collection in all eight Palestine refugee camps. In the West Bank, it supported sewage and storm water networks and rehabilitated a water treatment plant in Aqbat Jaber refugee camp.



### **Emergency agriculture support**

74. FAO supported the land rehabilitation of 160 dunums of open-field vegetable production for 80 farming households, the provision of tools and gardens to over 120 male-headed and 550 female-headed farming, herding and peri-urban poor households and the provision of small-scale animal units or fish ponds to over 500 male-headed and 400 female-headed households in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. It also rehabilitated water cisterns/wells for 750 families (7,800 individuals) to safeguard assets and expand livelihoods.

75. FAO also provided a quick response to Winter Storm Alexa by rehabilitating animal sheds, benefiting 1,200 livestock herders in Gaza and the West Bank. In addition, 740 small-scale farmers benefited from greenhouse rehabilitation. The emergency response was carried out in close coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture with regard to needs assessment, field verification, provision of materials and installation phases. The selection of materials and installation followed the “Build Back Better” approach, which ensured that the rehabilitated structures were technically sound and had a high level of resistance to future shocks.

### **Emergency education support**

76. With the support of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, UNICEF scaled up the psychosocial programmes implemented in family centres and adolescent-friendly spaces in Gaza through five psychosocial emergency teams, benefiting approximately 150,000 children, half of them girls, with professional psychosocial support services that helped to increase their resilience and coping mechanisms. These services included group counselling, individual counselling, emergency home visits, life skills, educational support and recreational activities. In addition, a total of 17,986 caregivers (35 per cent of them men) were reached through awareness-raising activities designed to improve parents’ knowledge and skills regarding how to protect their children and provide better support to them, especially in times of crisis.

### **Emergency housing support**

77. During the reporting period, UNRWA provided emergency assistance, including cash assistance, to 108 families (603 individuals) affected by Winter Storm Alexa and 208 families (1,219 individuals) affected by incursions by the Israeli security forces and home demolitions in the West Bank. In Gaza, UNRWA provided emergency assistance, including cash assistance, to 1,103 families affected by Winter Storm Alexa and 528 families impacted by the destruction or damage of their homes as a result of Israeli military action in November 2012.

## **C. United Nations system support to Palestinian institutions**

78. The United Nations provided technical support to line ministries for the development of sectoral strategies that informed the Palestinian National Development Plan 2014-2016. The Plan reflects the thematic priority areas and geographical focus areas included in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for the State of Palestine 2014-2016, indicating strong alignment between the approach of the United Nations to development programming and the development objectives of the Government of the State of Palestine. In addition, the

Plan reflects the United Nations programming principles of results-based management, gender equality and human rights.

79. The United Nations continued to provide technical assistance to strengthen the capacity of the Government of the State of Palestine in the area of mainstreaming human rights. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) worked closely with the Government in the preparation of a guidance document that provides concrete human rights-based goals, targets and interventions for incorporation in the Palestinian National Development Plan. This guidance document was adopted by the Government in January 2014. OHCHR published a study recommending which Palestinian laws should be revised to ensure compliance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and held workshops for Government officials on reporting procedures under these instruments.

80. UN-Women continued to support the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Women's Affairs in upholding international human rights standards on protecting women against violence and supported the establishment of an observatory on women's access to justice under the Independent Commission for Human Rights. Fifty-four cases involving violence against women have been monitored thus far. UN-Women continued to provide technical support to the Ministry of the Interior in line with the National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women. Ten Family Protection Units have been established in addition to the Family Protection Unit headquarters. Specific standard operating procedures have been developed for the Units and Unit staff were trained to ensure the quality and standardization of support.

81. ILO finalized an actuarial assessment that provides different scenarios for a new social security scheme. The assessment presented proposed provisions and contribution rates for a social security scheme that includes long-term benefits (old age, disability and survivors' pension), maternity benefits and employment injury benefits for private sector workers. It also supported the relevant national committee in the drafting of the legal framework of the proposed scheme to ensure it is in line with ILO standards and best practices worldwide.

82. UNOPS continued its programme of enhancing the operational capacity of the Palestinian Civil Police, the national security forces, the Presidential Guard and other security services, including the Civil Defence in their disaster risk response responsibilities. This was achieved through the provision of training programmes and equipment, information management systems development and infrastructure development. It also supported the Ministry of the Interior in a comprehensive institutional assessment in preparation for its multi-year institutional reform programme. In addition, it supported the Ministry of Justice in the construction of a major court facility in Tulkarem in the West Bank.

83. WHO supported the Ministry of Health in implementing its package of essential non-communicable disease interventions for primary health care, which was successfully introduced in three pilot districts. In addition, it continued to support the establishment of a National Institute of Public Health. It also supported the development of a cause of death registry and cancer registry, developed a draft report on the systematic review of water quality and health in the Gaza Strip,

finalized the National Health Information System strategy and assessment report and initiated the development of a national road traffic accidents registry.

84. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, building upon their previous collaboration, continued to strengthen the institutional and functional capacities of the Palestinian Shippers' (exporters and importers) Council. Its support led to the establishment of an eight-module professional training programme dedicated to international trade facilitation and logistics. It also provided the Palestinian private and public sectors with advisory services and technical knowledge in the area of trade facilitation.

#### **D. Private sector development**

85. UNRWA financed 13,030 loans valued at \$18.403 million to Palestinian businesses and households in 2013. Women and youth received 37 per cent and 34 per cent of these loans, respectively. The programme in the State of Palestine continued to run on an operationally self-sufficient and sustainable basis and earned a net income of \$367,865 from its microfinance operations.

#### **E. Coordination of United Nations assistance**

86. Under the auspices of the Deputy Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process/United Nations Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for the occupied Palestinian territory, collaboration and coordination among the numerous donor and United Nations forums was strengthened during the reporting period. The humanitarian country team in Jerusalem and the Operational Coordination Group in Gaza met regularly to agree on humanitarian advocacy and response measures. With the support of the Coordination Unit within UNSCO, the United Nations country team continued to coordinate its programming through the development of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for the State of Palestine 2014-2016 in alignment with the priorities of the Palestinian National Development Plan 2014-2016. Efforts to forge constructive partnerships among the United Nations, the Government of the State of Palestine and the broader aid community were strengthened. The United Nations continued the preparation of Ad Hoc Liaison Committee reports, strategies and guidance for development and humanitarian work in Gaza, East Jerusalem and Area C and, together with other humanitarian actors, the development of the 2014 strategic response plan for the occupied Palestinian territory.

### **IV. Donor response to the crisis**

#### **Budgetary and fiscal support**

87. In 2013, the Government of the State of Palestine struggled to meet its financial obligations, since expenditures were slightly higher than expected and revenue was less than projected. Although external financing was higher than expected, the Government of the State of Palestine accumulated considerable arrears during the year, particularly to the private sector and the pension system, and increased its stock of debt to domestic banks to \$1.2 billion by February 2014. The

external financing requirement for 2014 is estimated at \$1.6 billion (\$1.3 billion in budgetary support and \$0.3 billion in development financing).

#### **Donor coordination**

88. The local aid coordination structure continued to serve as a key forum for donors and the State of Palestine. The coordination of humanitarian assistance and advocacy continued to be led by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat during the reporting period.

89. One meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee was held during the reporting period, in New York on 25 September 2013.

### **V. Unmet needs**

90. The 2013 Consolidated Appeal Process for the occupied Palestinian territory requested a revised amount of \$401.6 million to tackle the most urgent humanitarian needs, of which 65.9 per cent was funded. Despite the increasing needs, the 2014 strategic response plan for the occupied Palestinian territory is requesting \$390 million, since the application of the Plan's criteria means that only the most urgent needs have been highlighted and that the distinction between humanitarian and development needs outlined in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for the State of Palestine 2014-2016 has been improved. As at 7 April 2014, only 17 per cent had been raised, indicating a bleak funding forecast.

91. Additional support is also urgently needed for the UNRWA core budget, which faces a predicted shortfall of \$68.2 million for 2014, as well as its 2013 Emergency Appeal for the occupied Palestinian territory for \$300 million, which has an estimated \$163.2 million shortfall.

92. United Nations agencies are seeking \$1.2 billion to support development programming in the context of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework.

### **VI. Challenges**

93. During the reporting period, the continued closure of the Gaza Strip, the closing of illegal tunnels and a marked reduction in the operation of the Rafah crossing by the Egyptian authorities resulted in a more acute energy crisis and the reverse development or de-development of Gaza, thereby increasing humanitarian needs. Following the discovery of an illegal tunnel into Israel in October 2013, the Government of Israel halted the import of key construction materials into the Gaza Strip, including for United Nations projects. Although the United Nations has since seen a partial resumption of import for projects that had previously been approved, the private sector remains unable to import aggregate iron bar and cement. In addition, at the time of writing, over \$100 million worth of United Nations construction projects submitted to the Government of Israel were still awaiting approval. In the West Bank, restrictions on movement and access, demolitions of Palestinian infrastructure and the associated displacement of Palestinians in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, have all increased. Furthermore, significant settlement activity continues to take place in the West Bank, including East

Jerusalem, heightening tension on the ground. Overall, the fact that a credible political horizon has not moved tangibly closer, despite resumed negotiations, continues to negatively affect the operating environment.

94. Should talks once again break down, there is a risk that pressure on the State-building effort and international support to it would grow, while the focus could shift to humanitarian operations. If a credible political horizon does not move tangibly closer, this would also negatively affect the operating environment. In Gaza, as long as fundamental political issues are not resolved, United Nations activities risk being reduced to little more than stopgap measures, with the much needed structural interventions outlined in the 2012 report of the United Nations country team in the occupied Palestinian territory entitled “Gaza in 2020: A liveable place?” remaining unfeasible until a more conducive operating environment is restored.

## VII. Conclusions

95. The operational context for the work of the United Nations during the reporting period remained challenging, while threats to the livelihoods of Palestinians, particularly demolitions, and the continued restrictions and divisions of Gaza continued to pose formidable obstacles to development in the State of Palestine. The United Nations will continue working towards the realization of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East on the basis of Security Council resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#), [338 \(1973\)](#), [1397 \(2002\)](#), [1515 \(2003\)](#), [1850 \(2008\)](#) and [1860 \(2009\)](#), an end to the occupation that began in 1967 and the establishment of a sovereign, democratic, viable and contiguous State of Palestine, existing side by side in peace with a secure Israel.

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Palestinian people**

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agencies and the international institutions  
associated with the United Nations**

## Assistance to the Palestinian people

### Report of the Secretary-General

#### *Summary*

The present report, submitted in compliance with General Assembly resolution 69/242, contains an assessment of the assistance received by the Palestinian people, needs still unmet and proposals for responding to them. It provides a description of efforts made by the United Nations, in cooperation with the Government, donors and civil society, to support the Palestinian population and institutions.

During the reporting period (May 2014-March 2015), the situation on the ground deteriorated following the breakdown of peace negotiations. The United Nations continued its efforts to respond to humanitarian and development challenges in the context of occupation, but placed particular focus on providing humanitarian assistance during and after the conflict between Gaza and Israel and support to the Palestinian Government of national consensus. The Organization, while maintaining that full lifting of the closures of Gaza was required, brokered a temporary agreement between the Governments of Israel and the State of Palestine to enable the entry, use and monitoring of “dual-use” material into Gaza to allow reconstruction work and the rehabilitation of damaged facilities at scale.

\* A/70/50.



The 2015 Strategic Response Plan, requiring \$705 million, outlines the programming to meet urgent humanitarian needs throughout the occupied Palestinian territory. To complement that programming and respond to the governance, recovery, reconstruction and structural development needs that have been compounded by the conflict, the United Nations Support Plan for the Transformation of the Gaza Strip 2014-2016 details the contribution of the United Nations to the National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan for Gaza for 2014-2017 and requests \$2.1 billion. In addition, at the request of the Government, the United Nations, together with the European Union and the World Bank, carried out a detailed needs assessment to further inform the recovery and reconstruction work in Gaza.

The Government continued to implement the Palestinian National Development Plan 2014-2016: State-building to Sovereignty. In support of those efforts, the United Nations continued to implement the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for 2014-2016. The financial resources required for the assistance provided through the Framework are some \$1.2 billion.

## I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted in compliance with General Assembly resolution 69/242, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its seventieth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution, containing an assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people and an assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them. Also included is a summary of key political developments and challenges relevant to the reporting period, as the international community continued to work to alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people, especially during and after the escalation of hostilities in Gaza, and to support the State-building efforts of the Government of the State of Palestine and to promote negotiations between the parties. The reporting period is from May 2014 to March 2015.

2. Information on the living and socioeconomic conditions of the Palestinian people is provided in several reports prepared by other United Nations agencies, in particular: the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan (to be issued); the annual report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) (A/69/13); and the report of the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee in September 2014.

3. The humanitarian, economic and development needs of the Palestinian people are reflected in several complementary strategic and resource mobilization documents. The 2015 Strategic Response Plan seeks \$705 million to meet the most urgent humanitarian needs by enhancing the protective environment and tackling the food insecurity of the most vulnerable groups throughout the occupied Palestinian territory. To address the governance, recovery, reconstruction and structural development needs that have been compounded by the conflict, the United Nations Support Plan for the Transformation of the Gaza Strip 2014-2016 details the United Nations contribution to the Palestinian National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan for Gaza for 2014-2017 and requests \$2.1 billion. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework presents the United Nations strategic response to the Palestinian development priorities contained in the Palestinian National Development Plan 2014-2016: State-building to Sovereignty.

4. During the conflict, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process worked with the parties and the international community to negotiate humanitarian pauses and ceasefires. In response to the unprecedented reconstruction needs of the Gaza Strip, the Office brokered a temporary agreement between the Governments of Israel and the State of Palestine to enable the entry, use and monitoring of “dual-use” material into Gaza to allow reconstruction work and the rehabilitation of damaged facilities at scale. Throughout the year, the Office continued its efforts to support the peace process and to ensure effective coordination among the Government of the State of Palestine, the United Nations, the international community and the Government of Israel. It also continued to document the economic and social conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory and to develop policies and programmes to improve them.



## II. Overview of the current situation

### A. Political context

5. Since the collapse of the peace talks brokered by the United States of America in April 2014, negotiations between the parties have not resumed. Negative developments thereafter, primarily the abduction and killing of three Israeli teenagers in the West Bank and of a Palestinian teenager in East Jerusalem, in addition to the conflict, reduced the prospects of resuming meaningful talks.

6. On 30 December, the Security Council rejected a Palestinian-drafted resolution submitted by Jordan in which it would have, among other things, called for a final peace agreement to be reached within a year and an end to the Israeli occupation by the end of 2017. The resolution failed to garner the minimum 9 of 15 votes.

7. On 31 December, the President of the State of Palestine, Mahmoud Abbas, signed instruments of accession to 18 international treaties, including the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, and lodged a declaration accepting the Court's jurisdiction since 13 June 2014. On 2 January, 16 instruments of accession were submitted to the Secretary-General, who accepted them in deposit after having ascertained that they were in due and proper form. In response, Israel began to suspend the transfer of tax revenue that it collected on behalf of the Palestinian Authority and was, at the time of writing, withholding the amounts for December, January and February.

8. Quartet envoys continued to meet regularly and to engage the parties to encourage them to resume peace negotiations. On 8 February, the principals met in Munich, Germany, and declared that they would remain actively engaged in preparing for a resumption of the peace process, including regular and direct outreach to Arab States.

9. Long-overdue Palestinian elections were not conducted during the reporting period. In Israel, the Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, dissolved his coalition Government on 2 December. General elections were held on 17 March, some two years ahead of schedule.

10. The situation in the West Bank, already tense owing to a hunger strike by more than 100 prisoners and an increase in demolitions, worsened on 12 June when three Israeli teenagers were kidnapped and murdered near Hebron, reportedly by Hamas affiliates. Hamas rejected the accusation but issued statements in which it glorified the perpetrators. A Palestinian teenager from East Jerusalem was abducted and killed in a retaliatory attack on 2 July; three Israelis were charged with the crime and are currently on trial. During intensive search operations in the West Bank after the kidnapping of the Israeli teenagers, including in major population centres, 6 Palestinians were killed, more than 800 injured and more than 500 reportedly arrested. A large majority of those arrested were Hamas affiliates and more than 50 Palestinians previously released as part of the so-called "Shalit deal".

11. Settlement activity continued apace, including significant announcements by the Israeli authorities in June and October that they would construct thousands of units. Following those announcements and the conflict, tensions increased in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Individual attacks by Palestinians, including

against the light rail system in Jerusalem, were met by punitive house demolitions and further access restrictions by Israel, including to Haram al-Sharif/Temple Mount. Clashes there occurred on a weekly basis until 13 November, when the Secretary of State of the United States, John F. Kerry, and the King of Jordan, King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein, held separate meetings in Amman with the President of the State of Palestine and the Prime Minister of Israel and agreement was struck to reduce the tensions. Israel has since lifted access restrictions on male Palestinian worshippers.

12. The deterioration of the situation in the West Bank also included plans to transfer Bedouins, including from the strategic E1 area, to relocation sites; increases in demolitions of Palestinian structures, including residences; clashes between Palestinians and settlers; and an escalation in violent clashes between Palestinian demonstrators and the Israeli security forces resulting in casualties on both sides, including Palestinian casualties caused by live fire. A mass hunger strike by Palestinians imprisoned in Israel was suspended on 25 June when an agreement was reached with the Israeli authorities to begin negotiations on prisoner conditions, including detention without charge.

13. In Gaza, at a time when the de facto authorities were under increasing financial pressure resulting from the closure of smuggling tunnels by Egypt, the relative calm prevailing since November 2012 unravelled following the murder of the three Israeli teenagers and the ensuing arrest of hundreds of Hamas supporters throughout the West Bank. There was also an increase in rockets fired from Gaza and Israeli air strikes on Gaza beginning on 24 June, including 85 rockets fired at Israel by Hamas and other militant groups on 7 July. From 8 July to 26 August, a 50-day Israeli military operation was conducted in and around Gaza. It was the third major conflict – and the longest and most violent – between Israel and Palestinian armed groups since Hamas assumed control of Gaza in 2007. Israel struck more than 5,000 locations in Gaza and reportedly demolished 32 tunnels, including 14 with openings inside Israel. In excess of 3,500 rockets were fired by Hamas and other Palestinian militants from Gaza at Israel; another 700 were intercepted by the Iron Dome defence system. More than 2,200 Palestinians, mostly civilians and including some 500 children, were killed. On the Israeli side, 66 Israel Defense Forces personnel and five civilians, including a child and a foreign national, were killed.

14. On 26 August, following several humanitarian pauses, an open-ended ceasefire brokered by Egypt went into effect. The agreement provided for a comprehensive ceasefire, the opening of the crossings between Gaza and Israel to allow for the entry of humanitarian assistance and reconstruction material, the expansion of the fishing zone and the continuation of indirect negotiations between the parties on all other topics within a month of the acceptance of the agreement. On 23 September, Israelis and Palestinians met in Cairo to discuss strengthening the ceasefire arrangements. At the time of writing, no additional meetings had been held and the ceasefire remained fragile, with Palestinian armed groups frequently test-firing rockets.

15. At a donor conference held on 12 October in Cairo, the international community pledged some \$5.4 billion for the reconstruction needs of Gaza and to support the budget of the Government of the State of Palestine until 2017. The United Nations, while maintaining that full lifting of the closures of Gaza was

required in accordance with Security Council resolution 1860 (2009), brokered a temporary agreement between the Governments of Israel and the State of Palestine to enable the entry, use and monitoring of “dual-use” material, such as aggregate, bars and cement, into Gaza for reconstruction. That temporary reconstruction mechanism has to date enabled some 88,000 households to purchase construction material to repair shelters. It has also processed more than 100 construction projects, including for housing, water networks and schools, of which 56 have been approved.

16. The pace of reconstruction remained far below the expectations of the population in Gaza, however, primarily as a result of the low level of disbursement of pledges made in Cairo and the lack of progress in tackling the underlying causes of instability. In addition, only limited financial support was provided to United Nations agencies carrying out vital humanitarian operations in Gaza. At the end of January, UNRWA suspended its cash assistance programme that supported repairs and provided rental subsidies to Palestinian refugee families owing to a lack of funds. Consequently, demonstrators attacked the compound housing the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process in Gaza on 29 January, damaging the facility and assets.

17. The Palestinian divide continued, notwithstanding the “Beach Camp” intra-Palestinian unity accord signed by the Government of the State of Palestine and Hamas on 23 April and the formation of an interim technocratic Government of national consensus by the President on 2 June on the basis of the Palestine Liberation Organization commitments of recognition of Israel, non-violence and adherence to previous agreements. The Government was broadly accepted by the international community, including the United Nations. On 25 September, Palestinian factions reached an understanding to facilitate the implementation of the unity accord, including by allowing the Government to take up its governance and security functions in Gaza, including control over the crossings, and effectively steer reconstruction efforts. Those efforts have yet to bear fruit, however, partly owing to the limited progress made on much-needed civil service reform and the consequent delays in paying the thousands of civil servants hired by the de facto authorities since June 2007.

## **B. Humanitarian and socioeconomic context**

### **Economic and fiscal developments**

18. According to the Ministry of Finance, while the Government continued to implement key economic and fiscal reforms, fiscal consolidation progressed slowly during the reporting period. The fiscal strain is evident through the continued accumulation of arrears and high public debt. In 2014, both total revenue and total expenditure were 5 per cent above budget, with net lending reaching 170 per cent of the budgeted amount. This resulted in a total deficit of \$1.64 billion. In 2014, the Government received just in excess of \$1 billion in direct budget support, a sum lower than projected.

19. According to the International Monetary Fund, economic activity contracted in 2014, following the conflict and mounting political tensions in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. It estimates that the real gross domestic product fell by nearly 1 per cent, the first contraction since 2006, with gross domestic product

declining by about 15 per cent in Gaza but rising by 4.5 per cent in the West Bank, with a sharp slowdown in the third quarter.

20. The International Monetary Fund indicates that a high degree of uncertainty and challenges are likely to prevent a strong economic recovery in 2015. Notably, beginning in January, the Government of Israel stopped transferring clearance revenue collected on goods imported into the West Bank and Gaza to the Government of the State of Palestine. Such revenue represents about two thirds of net revenue and is essential to the Palestinian budget and economy. Consequently, according to the Ministry of Finance, wage payments and other public spending were cut.

21. According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, unemployment remains high. At the end of 2014, 26.9 per cent of Palestinians were unemployed, an increase over the 2013 year-end rate of 23.4 per cent. The global average masks significant differences by sex, age and location. A total of 23.8 per cent of Palestinians males were unemployed, compared with 36.5 per cent of females. In addition, unemployment remains particularly high among young people, with 45.6 per cent of people between 20 and 24 years of age and 35 per cent of people between 25 and 29 years of age unemployed. Moreover, unemployment is significantly higher in the Gaza Strip (42.8 per cent) than in the West Bank (17.4 per cent).

#### **Humanitarian developments**

22. Between 1 May 2014 and 28 February 2015, 2,295 Palestinians were killed (2,245 in Gaza, including some 1,500 civilians; 50 civilians in the West Bank; overall, 569 children and 297 women) and 16,506 injured (11,233 in Gaza, including 3,436 children and 3,540 women, and 5,273 in the West Bank, including 1,011 children and 100 women) by the Israeli security forces. The vast majority of those deaths and injuries (2,219 deaths and 10,500 injuries) were a result of the conflict. During the reporting period, 85 Israelis (5 civilians as a result of the conflict and 12 civilians in the West Bank) were killed.

23. During the conflict, 11 UNRWA personnel were killed and 118 UNRWA installations, including 83 schools and 10 health centres, were damaged. On seven occasions, UNRWA schools being used as designated emergency shelters were either hit or struck by shells or other munitions in response to reports of firing from adjacent or nearby facilities. On three such occasions, persons sheltering at the schools were killed and many others injured.

24. In addition to fatalities and injuries, the conflict caused unprecedented displacement, with up to 500,000 Palestinians forced to flee their homes at the height of the conflict. Some 293,000 sought shelter in 85 UNRWA schools serving as designated emergency shelters. At the time of writing, UNRWA was continuing to provide shelter and basic services to almost 10,000 internally displaced persons living in 14 Agency-run collective centres. An estimated 100,000 homes were severely destroyed or damaged and severe damage was caused to public infrastructure, including the sole power plant in Gaza and critical water and sanitation infrastructure.

25. In the West Bank, demolitions of housing and livelihood assets continued during the reporting period, with 687 structures demolished in Area C and East

Jerusalem, displacing 1,330 persons, around 60 per cent of whom were children. At least 6,000 persons were affected by the demolitions.

26. According to the Israel Prison Service, 163 children (159 boys and 4 girls) between 14 and 17 years of age were being held in Israeli military detention for alleged security violations as at the end of January.

#### **Movement, humanitarian access and operational space**

27. In Gaza, restrictions on land and sea access imposed by the Government of Israel remained in place. The United Nations effectively engaged with the Government on humanitarian access during the conflict to allow for the unimpeded access of humanitarian supplies, but the Gaza Strip remained closed.

28. Access to and movement of Palestinians between most Palestinian urban centres in the West Bank, excluding East Jerusalem, remained restricted during the reporting period. Those restrictions on Palestinian access to land, social services and economic opportunities in East Jerusalem and Area C hinder development efforts, resulting in deteriorating living conditions and increased vulnerability.

29. From May 2014 to February 2015, at least 276 incidents of delayed or denied access by United Nations and non-governmental organization staff members were reported at Israeli checkpoints. Around 76 of the incidents occurred as United Nations staff crossed the barrier on the Jerusalem periphery.

#### **Barrier**

30. The construction of the barrier continued in the north-west of the Bethlehem Governorate, as did rerouting works near Khirbet Jubara in Tulkarem and around Qalqiliya. The United Nations Register of Damage Caused by the Construction of the Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory established pursuant to General Assembly resolution ES-10/17 continued its outreach and claim intake activities. More than 46,000 claims and 550,000 supporting documents have been collected. Claim intake activities in the Tubas, Jenin, Tulkarem, Qalqiliya, Salfit, Ramallah and Hebron Governorates have been completed, while outreach and claim intake activities in the Bethlehem Governorate are at an advanced stage.

### **III. United Nations response**

31. Through the 2014 Strategic Response Plan, the United Nations and its partners continued to coordinate and deliver humanitarian and protection assistance, including food assistance, to 1.9 million vulnerable Palestinians, in particular in Gaza. In addition, the United Nations and its partners coordinated and delivered humanitarian assistance, including food and shelter assistance, through the Gaza Crisis Appeal. The humanitarian strategies are aligned with the National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan for Gaza for 2014-2017 and United Nations development programming.

32. The United Nations implemented the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, a strategic planning framework that guides United Nations development programming for 2014-2016 and is aligned with the Palestinian National Development Plan for 2014-2016: State-building to Sovereignty. It places the Palestinian people at the centre of development programming with the aim of

enhancing human security, thereby laying the foundation for human development objectives in a context of occupation. To support recovery and reconstruction efforts in Gaza, the United Nations Support Plan for the Transformation of the Gaza Strip 2014-2016, which contributes to the National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan for Gaza for 2014-2017, is aimed at tackling governance and structural development issues.

## **A. Human and social development**

33. During the reporting period, including during the conflict, the United Nations continued to coordinate and deliver humanitarian assistance, including food assistance, to more than 1 million people, water and sanitation assistance to more than 1.5 million people and health and nutrition services to some 2.5 million people in the occupied Palestinian territory.

34. United Nations development programming focused on capacity development, infrastructure and the provision of direct assistance and basic services. As outlined in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, the work is centred on six strategic areas: economic empowerment, livelihoods, decent work and food security; governance, rule of law, justice and human rights; education; health care; social protection; and urban development, natural resource management and infrastructure. The financial resources required are estimated at \$1.2 billion, of which \$657 million had been mobilized at the time of writing.

35. Below are illustrative examples of the types of assistance provided by the United Nations.

### **Education**

36. Nine United Nations agencies continued to support the implementation of the Education for All package for the State of Palestine, which is led by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education to meet capacity-building needs in inclusive and child-friendly education and early childhood development. Work included supporting the Ministry in the opening of 47 preschool classrooms (33 in the West Bank and 14 in Gaza) and for the implementation of the new strategy on early childhood development. In addition, 77 pilot schools in the West Bank and Gaza (including 12 UNRWA schools) benefited from various education interventions, including school feeding programmes and capacity development programmes focusing on inclusive and child-friendly education, early childhood development and special educational needs. Before the conflict, United Nations agencies also improved access to education through the rehabilitation of 34 schools in the West Bank and 37 schools in Gaza, benefiting 34,000 children. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), along with its national partners, supported safe and protected access for some 6,900 children to schools in 18 locations, including checkpoints, gates and schools most vulnerable to settler violence and harassment by the Israel Defense Forces.

37. UNRWA provided free primary education to more than 290,000 children enrolled in 349 elementary and preparatory schools throughout the West Bank and Gaza. In Gaza, 86.5 per cent of the 252 UNRWA schools currently operate on a double-shift or triple-shift system (an increase from 71 per cent in 2013). The increase is the result of a continuously growing population and several UNRWA

school buildings being used as shelters for 10,000 internally displaced persons. As a result of the conflict, the beginning of the new school year for some 240,000 pupils in UNRWA schools was delayed by three weeks. UNRWA conducted psychosocial and recreational activities and counselling sessions to help children in their transition back to school.

38. UNICEF provided supplies and equipment and trained 50 staff in the early detection of hearing and speech difficulties, covering 8,000 children in government schools in Gaza. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) trained 25 pupils to be young educators on sexual and reproductive health for adolescents and young people. Those trained reached an additional 680 pupils through after-school activities throughout the West Bank. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) continued to implement the Al Fakhoura Scholarship Programme for Gazan pupils, supporting 225 additional scholarships during the reporting period to bring the total number of scholarships provided to 445.

39. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) established 12 libraries (10 in the West Bank and 2 in Gaza) accessible to persons with disabilities and trained 10 newly recruited librarians.

### **Health**

40. UNRWA continued to be a major provider of health-care services, operating 42 health-care facilities, 22 primary health-care centres, a hospital and a non-communicable-disease referral centre in Gaza and the West Bank and employing more than 2,000 staff. Annually, an average of 26,000 Palestine refugees in the West Bank received assistance to meet hospital-care costs. During the conflict, UNRWA health services were extended to all Palestinians in Gaza.

41. UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO) supported the Ministry of Health in procuring polio vaccines and coordinated a national immunization campaign, which benefited 639,481 children. UNICEF also trained 250 Ministry and UNRWA staff on advanced immunization skills. WHO conducted a mass public awareness campaign on Ebola virus disease.

42. UNICEF completed the rehabilitation of neonatal units in six government hospitals in Gaza and the West Bank and enhanced the skills of 285 health-care professionals in an effort to improve neonatal health care. It also continued to support the Ministry of Health in implementing the baby-friendly hospital initiative in 11 government hospitals and reached 4,554 high-risk women and their newborns through the postnatal home visits programme.

### **Water and sanitation**

43. In the West Bank, UNDP improved access to natural resources through the construction or rehabilitation of 229 water cisterns and the rehabilitation of water networks and springs. In addition, 52 wastewater treatment units were installed, benefiting 52 households in four rural communities. In Gaza, UNDP completed the rehabilitation and expansion of a solid waste dumping site. UNICEF continued to improve access to water by supporting the Palestinian Water Authority and the Coastal Municipalities Water Utility in the construction and installation of a short-term low-volume seawater desalination plant in Gaza. It also provided water storage tanks to households in the access-restricted areas, which benefited at least

7,112 people, and completed construction work to improve access to adequate sanitation for at least 900 people. UNICEF supported improved access to water through water delivery and water network repairs, benefiting 64,099 people in the West Bank.

44. UNICEF also continued to support the water and sanitation in schools programme, which provided improved and sustainable access to safe water and sanitation for 44,342 pupils through the rehabilitation and construction of water and sanitation facilities, while addressing the special needs of pupils with disabilities in 91 schools in the West Bank and Gaza. It installed solar distillation units in three schools (1 in the West Bank and 2 in Gaza), providing around 800 pupils with clean drinking water.

### **Employment**

45. United Nations agencies continued to support income-generating and self-employment opportunities for vulnerable Palestinians. UNDP targeted around 3,500 families throughout the West Bank and Gaza and focused on income-generating activities in microenterprise and small enterprise development. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), through 62 women's centres, focused on job opportunities in food processing and marketing. The programme directly benefited 761 women workers, and more than 43,400 women benefited from the psychosocial counselling, legal counselling, training and other services provided at the centres. Forty centres have reached financial sustainability. The activity also benefited 348 schools and more than 134,351 schoolchildren who received healthy and affordable snacks made by women from the community-based centres. UN-Women also provided training for 70 women in the West Bank and Gaza on designing and producing high-quality marketable Palestinian handicrafts. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) supported 27 cooperatives (including 6 women's cooperatives), helping 1,285 persons to achieve improved economic conditions through training to strengthen their marketing skills and the provision of tools to improve the marketability of their products.

46. The International Labour Organization continued to implement a programme to support livelihoods and job opportunities in the fishery sector in Gaza, which facilitated the development of a recovery plan and provided management training to cooperative members. In addition, UNDP supported some 520 farmers with asset replacement and business development services.

47. UNDP supported access to trade information by launching the first Palestinian trade portal in October 2014. It provides Palestinian businesses with information on trade agreements, conditions for export to specific countries, feasibility analysis, procedures and guidelines, in addition to allowing international partners to gain access to information on Palestinian businesses and products and services.

### **Targeted social protection**

48. In Gaza, UNRWA distributed 305,424 food parcels to 21,286 Palestine refugee households through the social safety net programme, but was forced to suspend cash assistance owing to budgetary constraints in January. It also distributed 108,159 food parcels and \$1.06 million in supplementary cash assistance to 9,509 Palestine refugee households through its social safety net programme in the West Bank. The



World Food Programme (WFP) continued to support the Government's social safety net programme, through which it provided more 211,020 people in the State of Palestine, both in the West Bank and Gaza, with food and food vouchers.

### **Culture**

49. UNESCO continued to support the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage in the West Bank and Gaza, with 12 historic sites renovated for public use and another 16 historic sites under renovation.

50. UNDP supported the establishment of the first Palestinian public library in the Old City of Jerusalem, including by providing equipment and furniture and undertaking rehabilitation work.

### **Food security and agriculture**

51. United Nations agencies, including FAO, continued to improve water availability and management to enhance agricultural production in Area C of the West Bank. A total of 1,400 people in Area C have benefited from the rehabilitation of wells and 7,250 dunums of agricultural land are now again irrigated efficiently. FAO also rehabilitated five wells, benefiting 1,400 persons, and UNDP rehabilitated another 10, benefiting 300 new farms in highly marginalized areas. UNDP constructed 36 km of agricultural access roads and 120 water cisterns to enable supplementary irrigation.

52. UNDP finalized the development of an additional 1,976 dunums of land for marginalized farmers in areas of the West Bank that are in direct proximity to Israeli settlements or in the seam zones, bringing the total reclaimed land to some 13,200 dunums. It also supported land development activities to ensure the sustainable use of land.

53. Through the agriculture sector revitalization activities of FAO, 1,002 farmers received intensive training on pest management and global good agricultural practices certification.

### **Human rights, women, children and young people**

54. Five United Nations agencies continued a joint programme to strengthen respect for the human rights of persons with disabilities through legislation, in compliance with the Palestinian Disability Law and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and to mainstream considerations for persons with disabilities in schools and employment services.

55. United Nations agencies continued to support the special needs of women, including by tackling gender based violence. UN-Women provided capacity-building activities for officers of the Palestinian Civil Police in family protection units to respond to cases of violence against women with a view to safeguarding rights and due process. It continued to support the Mehwar Centre for the Protection and Empowerment of Women and Families in the West Bank, which provided 355 legal advisory, consultation and representation services. UNRWA established referral systems in Gaza and the West Bank to tackle gender-based violence. More than 900 survivors of gender-based violence were identified and legal and psychosocial services were provided to more than 700 persons referred.

56. United Nations agencies conducted awareness-raising activities on various gender, youth and human rights issues. UNRWA reached more than 14,000 Palestine refugees in community-awareness and prevention activities relating to gender-based violence, children's and human rights, domestic violence, neglect and sexual abuse. UNESCO conducted an advocacy campaign on gender-based violence in 11 governorates of the West Bank, targeting young people from marginalized rural areas. With UNICEF support, more than 6,500 children vulnerable to violence, abuse, exploitation and in contact with the law benefited from child protection services provided by 14 child protection networks and 11 police family and juvenile protection units. In partnership with the Higher Council of Palestinian Youth and Sport and non-governmental organization partners, United Nations agencies reached 122,755 adolescents, who participated in and benefited from educational and recreation activities in safe spaces.

57. UNICEF continued to lead the inter-agency working group for the monitoring and reporting of grave violations against children in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory in accordance with Security Council resolutions 1612 (2005) and 1882 (2009). The working group continued to document grave violations and informed programmatic action and advocacy. Its documentation of the treatment of children in military detention also informed the continuing dialogue with the Israeli authorities, specifically in relation to the implementation of pilot-testing of the issuance of summonses in lieu of night arrests.

#### **Environment, housing and urban development**

58. UNDP continued to implement additional phases of the construction of the Jericho Agro-Industrial Park through the provision of essential infrastructure services, including water, electricity, buildings and structures and telecommunications.

59. UNDP provided support for adequate housing to 160 low-income families in East Jerusalem, improved housing for 840 families in marginalized areas in the West Bank and access to renewable energy for 1,796 families in the West Bank.

### **B. United Nations system emergency assistance**

60. The United Nations and humanitarian partners coordinated humanitarian assistance during the conflict, including provision of water, food assistance, shelter and non-food items to 340,000 displaced persons at the height of the conflict in United Nations and government shelters, in addition to support to internally displaced persons with host families through the distribution of humanitarian aid. Psychosocial support was provided to thousands of children and caregivers in shelters. UNRWA provided in-kind food commodities to more than 830,000 Palestine refugees and turned its facilities into designated emergency shelters. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs coordinated the humanitarian response on behalf of the international community.

61. The 2015 Strategic Response Plan is seeking \$705 million, of which nearly 80 per cent is for Gaza, nearly double the amount requested for 2014.

62. In addition, the UNRWA Emergency Appeal for 2015 is requesting \$414.4 million to meet the needs of some 2 million Palestine refugees in Gaza and

the West Bank. Most of the funding requested (88 per cent) is for Gaza. The Emergency Appeal for 2014 mobilized \$127 million of the \$300 million requested, with most of the funds mobilized allocated to Gaza.

63. In Gaza, shelter remains the primary humanitarian need, with some 100,000 persons remaining displaced as a result of the damage and destruction of housing stemming from the conflict and the slow pace of reconstruction.

64. The energy situation in the Gaza Strip remains extremely fragile. During the reporting period, the United Nations, with contributions from Turkey, put in place a safety net to replenish the on-site reserves for essential services (e.g. health and water/sanitation). Nevertheless, the current situation highlights the need to develop a structural solution to the energy problems facing Gaza.

65. In the immediate aftermath of the conflict, and at the request of United Nations entities, the United Nations Mine Action Service surveyed and cleared 105 key infrastructure sites that had been damaged or destroyed, including the Gaza power plant, to ensure the safe delivery of humanitarian assistance.

### **Emergency food support**

66. In Gaza, UNRWA provided half of the population (868,000 refugees) with food aid. UNRWA and WFP provided food parcels to more than 340,000 individuals per day at the peak of the conflict. They also jointly undertook an exceptional distribution of basic food rations targeting families (620,000 individuals) who typically are not eligible to receive regular food assistance from them. In total, WFP reached more than 1.4 million people in Gaza with food assistance and provided vouchers to an additional 300,000 internally displaced persons.

67. In the West Bank, UNRWA and WFP continued their joint assistance programme for marginalized Bedouins and herders, distributing food to more than 30,000 individuals. In response to a winter storm in January, WFP distributed food to some 500 people. UNRWA, through a partnership with WFP, introduced electronic food vouchers throughout the West Bank, benefiting 45,000 individuals. Through the programme, some \$2.4 million was spent on food and staples at local shops.

### **Emergency income generation**

68. In Gaza, the UNRWA job creation programme provided 23,419 jobs, while more than 5,000 direct and indirect jobs were provided through UNRWA construction projects, accounting for 9.4 per cent of the employed workforce in the Gaza Strip.

69. In the West Bank, UNRWA provided emergency cash-for-work support to some 6,000 households (35,900 individuals) in 19 Palestine refugee camps. This provided a cash injection of around \$7.5 million to food-insecure households. Owing to a shortage of funds, UNRWA no longer operates the cash-for-work programme outside the camps, but instead supports non-camp refugees with electronic food vouchers.

### **Emergency health support**

70. Through UNRWA support, 18,292 Palestine refugees in Gaza received individual psychosocial counselling, while 10,806 group counselling sessions were conducted. In addition, 37,549 public awareness sessions were held in schools, health centres and other facilities. During the conflict, health focal points in each UNRWA designated emergency shelter and collective centres serving 300,000 internally displaced persons conducted health awareness campaigns to control and prevent outbreaks of infectious diseases and undertook 129,662 medical consultations.

71. The UNRWA emergency health programme in the West Bank supported six mobile health clinics operating in 56 locations with poor access to primary health services. The clinics served some 121,000 individuals and delivered close to 130,000 patient consultations throughout the year. In addition, UNRWA supported 49 vulnerable Bedouin and herder communities in Area C with mobile community mental health services.

72. WHO facilitated the delivery of critical life-saving drugs and medical disposables in Gaza. It also provided urgently needed technical assistance, medical equipment and spare parts, especially for generators and medical equipment damaged as a result of the unstable power supply and the frequent blackouts caused by fuel shortages.

73. UNFPA provided the Ministry of Health with critical medication and supplies to sustain reproductive health services at maternities and primary health-care clinics in Gaza. It supported mobile health teams serving displaced persons with antenatal and postnatal care, benefiting 1,380 people, including 676 pregnant women in shelters. It also distributed 882 dignity kits to internally displaced women and girls in host communities.

74. UNFPA supported national partners in providing psychosocial support to 105 health-care professionals in the primary health centres in Gaza and 3,883 persons from the most affected families.

### **Emergency water and sanitation support**

75. UNRWA supported water and sanitation and health-care providers operating inside and outside the Palestine refugee camps in Gaza with fuel and other supplies needed for critical operations and managed solid waste collection in all eight camps. In 2014, more than 10 million litres of fuel were provided by UNRWA, including 6.3 million litres of diesel distributed to health-care and water and sanitation providers. During the conflict, UNRWA provided potable and non-potable water to designated emergency shelters.

76. Through its partners, UNICEF delivered safe drinking water to 81,500 people using tankers. In addition, more than 8,000 people had access to water filling stations during the first three months after the conflict.

77. Through support from UNICEF, 411,612 people in Gaza benefited from improved access to water through water network repairs, including as a result of the provision of spare parts for generators used by the Coastal Municipalities Water Utility, the establishment of water filling stations and the installation of domestic water storage tanks in the access-restricted areas. Another 175,768 people benefited

from wastewater network repairs, the rehabilitation of septic tanks and the rehabilitation of water and sanitation facilities in those areas.

78. UNICEF and WFP distributed 14,000 vouchers, enabling 84,000 people to have access to basic hygiene supplies in the first few weeks after the ceasefire.

#### **Emergency agriculture support**

79. In response to the conflict, FAO distributed fodder and water tanks to 5,000 livestock herders and material to safeguard the assets of 240 herders.

80. In Area C, FAO provided 2,412 livestock herders with material and training to mitigate the risk of economic shock, distributed equipment for the safeguarding of assets to 1,800 herders and rehabilitated cisterns to the benefit of 1,056 herders. In addition, it provided training and cash transfers for land rehabilitation to 117 farmers.

#### **Emergency education support**

81. Following the conflict, United Nations agencies supported children as they returned to school. The United Nations Mine Action Service surveyed and cleared all UNRWA schools and 21 government schools of explosive remnants of war, allowing more than 250,000 children to return safely to school. UNRWA implemented a three-phase emergency education programme, focusing on providing safe spaces and ensuring the psychosocial well-being of children as part of their transition back to school. UNICEF procured and distributed education supplies, benefiting 130,000 children, and teaching aid and recreational kits for 395 schools.

82. UNICEF supported the training of 11,000 teachers and other education personnel on classroom management and psychosocial support to prepare them for the new school year. To respond to the special needs of younger children, it distributed early childhood development materials to 11,300 preschoolers.

#### **Emergency housing support**

83. The United Nations Office for Project Services established a materials monitoring unit to coordinate and ensure end-use monitoring of the construction material intended to support the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism.

84. The United Nations Mine Action Service and UNDP worked to remove rubble resulting from the conflict. The Service cleared and safely removed explosive remnants of war from 84 areas and UNDP removed more than 60,000 tons of rubble of a total of 2.2 million tons.

85. At the time of writing, UNRWA was continuing to provide shelter and basic services to almost 8,000 internally displaced persons living in 13 Agency-run collective centres. It provided transitional shelter cash assistance, such as rental subsidies, to 7,653 families (worth \$7.1 million) and cash assistance to make small shelter repairs to 69,717 families (worth \$79.5 million). In addition, UNDP provided \$8 million in cash assistance to more than 4,000 non-refugee families displaced by the conflict, allowing them to have access to temporary shelter while their homes were being reconstructed.

86. In the West Bank, UNRWA provided cash assistance to more than 3,370 individuals after their homes were demolished by the Israeli authorities.

87. Through support from the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, 280 poor households, 100 of which were headed by women, moved into houses newly constructed or renovated in Gaza and West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

### **C. United Nations system support to Palestinian institutions**

88. At the request of the Government, the United Nations, the World Bank and the European Union, together with the Government, embarked on a detailed needs assessment to provide a comprehensive assessment of the damages, losses and recovery needs in the governance, productive, infrastructure and social sectors, following the escalation of hostilities in Gaza, to inform recovery planning and prioritization of interventions.

89. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights continued to work with the Palestinian authorities, the Independent Commission for Human Rights and civil society to ensure that the commitments set forth in the Palestinian National Development Plan for 2014-2016: State-building to Sovereignty were implemented in accordance with the new legal commitments stemming from the Government's accession to various human rights treaties. The Office, the Commission and several United Nations agencies embarked on an intensive programme to build the capacity of and support ministries, including through substantive training on the provisions of the treaties and on the requirements for effective monitoring and reporting as the ministries prepared their reform programme and compiled their initial reports for the Geneva-based treaty bodies.

90. In addition, UN-Women continued to support the Commission in monitoring women's access to justice in the occupied Palestinian territory. The Commission published its first report in June 2014, highlighting the challenges facing women in gaining access to justice and the need to apply the Criminal Code and other laws relating to women's rights, in addition to women's right to defence and legal representation.

91. WFP supported the Civil Defence in building capacity in the area of emergency preparedness and disaster risk reduction, including the development of an information management system that integrates a disaster preparedness web portal to raise public awareness of risks, a smartphone tool for emergency needs assessments and geospatial data infrastructure. The tools were handed over to the Civil Defence to enhance and expand its ability to coordinate and respond to disasters.

92. The United Nations Office for Project Services continued to support the Palestinian Civil Police, the national security forces, the Presidential Guard and other security services through institutional capacity-building initiatives, including training programmes, equipment procurement, the development of information management systems and the provision of physical infrastructure and equipment. It also supported the Ministry of the Interior in the design of a comprehensive institutional capacity-building programme covering the full range of the Ministry's functions.

93. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, building upon their previous collaboration, continued to strengthen the institutional and functional capacity of the Palestinian Shippers' Council. It also provided the Palestinian

private and public sectors with advisory services and technical knowledge in the realm of trade facilitation.

#### **D. Private sector development**

94. UNRWA financed 13,811 loans valued at \$19.4 million to Palestinian businesses and households in 2014. Women and young people received 30 per cent and 35 per cent of the loans, respectively. The self-sufficiency and sustainability of the programme were affected by the conflict, as evidenced by a net loss of \$739,400 in Gaza, whereas in the West Bank the programme earned a net income of \$280,821 from its microfinance operations.

#### **E. Coordination of United Nations assistance**

95. Under the auspices of the Deputy Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process/United Nations Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator, collaboration and coordination between the numerous donor and United Nations forums were strengthened during the reporting period. The humanitarian country team met regularly to agree on humanitarian advocacy and response measures. With the support of the Coordination Unit within the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, the United Nations country team continued to coordinate its programming through the development of the United Nations Development Action Framework in alignment with the priorities of the Palestinian National Development Plan for 2014-2016: State-building to Sovereignty. Efforts to forge constructive partnerships between the United Nations, the Government and the broader aid community were strengthened. The United Nations continued the preparation of an Ad Hoc Liaison Committee report, strategies and guidance for development and humanitarian work in Gaza, East Jerusalem and Area C and, together with other humanitarian actors, the development of the Gaza Crisis Appeal, the 2015 Strategic Response Plan and the United Nations Support Plan for the Reconstruction of the Gaza Strip 2014-2016.

### **IV. Donor response to the crisis**

#### **Budgetary and fiscal support**

96. In 2014, the Government struggled to meet its financial obligations, with expenditure slightly higher than expected and revenue less than projected. It accumulated considerable arrears during the year, particularly to the private sector and the pension system, and had increased its stock of debt to domestic banks to \$1.7 billion by January 2015.

#### **Donor coordination**

97. The Coordination Unit within the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process has increasingly been called upon to support the United Nations system and prepares substantive contributions for various forums, such as the twice-yearly meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee. The Unit also works to coordinate policy positions and address impediments to the implementation of programmes with key donors and outside actors.

98. The local aid coordination structure continued to serve as a key forum for donors and the State of Palestine. The coordination of humanitarian assistance and advocacy continued to be led by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs during the reporting period.

99. The Ad Hoc Liaison Committee met once during the reporting period, on 22 September 2014 in New York.

## **V. Unmet needs**

100. Of the \$5.4 billion pledged in Cairo for the recovery and reconstruction of Gaza, some 23 per cent has been disbursed.

101. Given the continued needs, the 2015 Strategic Response Plan is requesting \$705 million. To date, 21 per cent has been raised. Additional support is also urgently needed for the UNRWA core budget, which faces a predicted shortfall of \$81.3 million for 2015.

102. United Nations agencies are seeking \$1.2 billion to support development programming in the context of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, of which 53 per cent has been funded to date. The UNRWA Emergency Appeal for 2015 is seeking \$414.4 million to cover the most pressing humanitarian needs of Palestine refugees. UNRWA estimates that \$720 million is needed to allow families to repair their homes and to provide ongoing rental subsidies.

## **VI. Challenges**

103. During the reporting period, the conflict resulted in unprecedented losses and destruction, thereby increasing humanitarian and reconstruction needs. While the temporary Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism is functioning, reconstruction is occurring at a slower pace than needed owing to limited donor funding. The Government must be allowed to assume its full responsibilities in Gaza.

104. In the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, restrictions on movement and access, demolitions of Palestinian infrastructure and associated displacement of Palestinians have all increased. Furthermore, significant settlement activity is continuing, heightening tensions on the ground. Most importantly, the absence of a credible political horizon continues to negatively affect the operating environment.

## **VII. Conclusions**

105. The operational context for the work of the United Nations during the reporting period was increasingly challenging owing to the conflict and the continued threats to the livelihoods of Palestinians, especially demolitions, while the persistent restrictions continued to pose formidable obstacles to development. The United Nations will continue to work towards the realization of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 1397 (2002), 1515 (2003), 1850 (2008) and 1860 (2009), an end to the occupation that began in 1967 and the establishment of a sovereign, democratic, viable and contiguous Palestinian State, existing side by side in peace with a secure Israel.





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**Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance**

**Economic and Social Council  
2016 session**

24 July 2015-27 July 2016

Agenda item 14

**Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations**

## Assistance to the Palestinian people

### Report of the Secretary-General

#### *Summary*

The report, submitted in compliance with General Assembly resolution 70/108, contains an assessment of the assistance received by the Palestinian people and an assessment of needs still unmet, together with proposals for responding to them. It provides a description of efforts made by the United Nations, in cooperation with the Government of the State of Palestine, donors and civil society, to support the Palestinian population and institutions.

During the reporting period (April 2015-March 2016), negative trends on the ground persisted, resulting in a two-State solution becoming even more distant. The United Nations continued its efforts to respond to humanitarian and development challenges in the context of occupation, while focusing in particular on supporting the recovery and reconstruction of Gaza after the conflict with Israel in the middle of 2014.

The 2016 Humanitarian Response Plan, requiring \$571 million, outlines the programming to address urgent humanitarian needs throughout the occupied Palestinian territory. In addition, at the request of the Government of the State of Palestine, the United Nations, together with the European Union and the World Bank, prepared a detailed needs assessment and recovery framework for Gaza, to inform the recovery and reconstruction work, and estimated the effects of the escalation of hostilities in Gaza in 2014 at \$1.4 billion in damages and \$1.7 billion in economic losses.

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\* [A/71/50](#).



The Government continued to implement the Palestinian National Development Plan 2014-2016: State-building to Sovereignty. In support of those efforts, the United Nations continued to implement the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for 2014-2017. The financial resources required for the assistance provided through the Framework are some \$2.15 billion.

## **I. Introduction**

1. The present report is submitted in compliance with General Assembly resolution 70/108, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it, at its seventy-first session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution, containing an assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people and an assessment of the needs still unmet, with specific proposals for responding effectively to them. Also included is a summary of key political developments and challenges relevant to the reporting period, as the international community continued to work to alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people, especially with regard to the recovery and reconstruction of the Gaza Strip, and to support the State-building efforts of the Government of the State of Palestine. The reporting period is from April 2015 to March 2016.

2. Information on the living and socioeconomic conditions of the Palestinian people is provided in several reports prepared by other United Nations agencies and submitted to various United Nations bodies, in particular: the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan (to be issued); the annual report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) (A/70/13); and the report of the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee in September 2015.

3. The humanitarian, economic and development needs of the Palestinian people are reflected in several complementary strategic and resource mobilization documents. The 2016 Strategic Response Plan seeks \$517 million to address the most urgent humanitarian needs, including by enhancing the protective environment and improving access to essential services for the most vulnerable groups throughout the occupied Palestinian territory. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework for 2014-2017 presents the United Nations strategic response to the Palestinian development priorities contained in the Palestinian National Development Plan for 2014-2016: State-building to Sovereignty.

4. Throughout the year, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process continued its efforts to support the peace process and to promote coordination among the Government of the State of Palestine, the United Nations, the international community and the Government of Israel. The Office also continued to document the economic and social conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory and to develop policies and programmes to improve them.

## **II. Overview of the current situation**

### **A. Political context**

5. The reporting period was characterized by continued negative trends on the ground, including ongoing settlement activity, high rates of demolitions of Palestinian structures and a lack of genuine Palestinian unity, all imperilling the viability of a two-State solution. The continued lack of a political horizon for a two-

State solution contributed to the growing frustration among Palestinians, especially young people, fuelling a wave of violence by mainly non-affiliated individuals that began in October 2015.

6. The United Nations continued to engage, including through the Quartet, with Israeli and Palestinian leaders and with key Arab States to explore avenues to preserve the two-State solution and create the conditions for a return to meaningful negotiations. In September 2015, the Quartet called upon the parties to take significant steps on the ground, consistent with prior agreements, to strengthen Palestinian institutions, security and economic prospects, while respecting Israeli security needs.

7. The new Israeli Government, headed by the Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, took office on 14 May 2015 and continued settlement activities in the occupied West Bank, including in East Jerusalem, albeit at a slower overall pace for settlement planning and tendering than in the previous reporting period. The beginning of 2016 witnessed a sharp increase in demolitions of Palestinian-owned structures by the Israeli authorities in the West Bank. Those actions had a particular impact on Palestinian Bedouin and herding communities in Area C. The Israeli authorities also reaffirmed their intention to complete the so-called legalization process of several settlement outposts and, on 10 March 2016, classified 2,340 dunums (578 acres) of land in the Jordan Valley as “State land”.

8. On 31 July 2015, an arson attack by Jewish extremists in the village of Duma, in the occupied West Bank, killed three of the four members of the Dawabsheh family. Holding Israel “fully responsible”, the Palestine Liberation Organization linked the attack to what it claimed was a decades-long Israeli policy of impunity towards settler attacks. The Government of Israel issued several indictments on 3 January 2016 and two Israelis were later convicted.

9. Against a backdrop of other drivers, tensions around holy sites in Jerusalem in September 2015 sparked an escalation of violence throughout the occupied Palestinian territory and Israel, beginning in October 2015. A series of stabbings, shootings and vehicle attacks by Palestinians against Israelis in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and Israel, claimed the lives of 30 Israelis and 136 Palestinians, many of the latter being reported as perpetrators. There was also an upsurge in clashes with Israeli forces beginning in October, with 59 Palestinians killed or later succumbing to wounds sustained. The pressure to suspend security coordination notwithstanding, the Israeli and Palestinian security forces continued to coordinate throughout the reporting period. The United Nations called for thorough investigations in cases in which there were serious questions regarding the appropriate use of force by the Israeli security forces, and repeatedly called for community, religious and political leaders on both sides to curb incitement to violence.

10. The United States of America facilitated understandings on 24 October 2015 between Israel and Jordan on upholding the status quo at the Haram al-Sharif/Temple Mount, which helped to ease tensions at that flashpoint site. Earlier, on 5 October, the Prime Minister of Israel had prohibited members of the Knesset and ministers from visiting the site in an effort to lower tensions. Nevertheless, renewed provocations by extremist elements on either side, in particular during religious holidays, cannot be ruled out and could reignite tensions. During the holy month of Ramadan, Israel lifted

age restrictions for access to the compound, which saw some 3 million visits by Muslim worshippers from the West Bank, Gaza and Jerusalem.

11. The ceasefire that brought an end to the hostilities between Israel and Palestinian armed groups in Gaza on 26 August 2014 held, but remained fragile. Demonstrations along the security fence between Gaza and Israel continued and incidents of cross-border shootings by the Israeli security forces increased in the second half of 2015. On 22 June 2015, the independent commission of inquiry established pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution S-21/1 released its report on the conflict of 2014, including recommendations aimed at promoting accountability by all sides.

12. The reconstruction process in Gaza continued, including the rebuilding of homes completely destroyed in the hostilities of 2014. To date, more than 100,000 people whose homes were partially damaged have gained access to material to repair them, while some 2,000 households have gained access to material to rebuild their fully demolished homes. More than 90 per cent of damaged and demolished schools and hospitals have been repaired. The United Nations continued to assert that the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism was a temporary arrangement and to call for a lifting of all closures of Gaza within the framework of Security Council resolution 1860 (2009).

13. On the recovery of the economy in Gaza, the provision of basic services and the reconstruction process continued to be constrained by Israeli closure policies, the slow disbursement of pledged funds and the persistent intra-Palestinian divide. The Government of national consensus formed in June 2014 remained unable to assume its governance and security functions in Gaza, including control over the crossings. Reconciliation discussions between Fatah and Hamas, in addition to other Palestinian factions, in July 2015 and most recently in March 2016, on forming a national unity Government and holding long-overdue elections, have yet to bear fruit.

14. The continued destruction of illegal tunnels from Gaza and the closure of the Rafah crossing, which was open for only 30 days during the reporting period, further aggravated the difficult humanitarian situation in the Strip. Those factors significantly increased the financial pressure on the de facto authorities in Gaza, who increased taxes, fuelling rare public anger, including demonstrations and protests. Adding to that pressure were challenges to the political authority of Hamas from Salafi-jihadist groups, resulting in occasional crackdowns and arrests.

## **B. Humanitarian and socioeconomic context**

### **Economic and fiscal developments**

15. The economic conditions were characterized by a subdued recovery from the conflict. Real gross domestic product (GDP) increased by 3.5 per cent over 2014 levels, driven by growth of 2.5 per cent in the West Bank and 6.8 per cent in Gaza. The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics estimates that under a baseline scenario GDP will grow by about 3.8 per cent in 2016, while the International Monetary Fund projects 3.5 per cent. Such growth will be insufficient to significantly increase per capita income or reduce unemployment.

16. A high degree of political uncertainty, together with the withholding of clearance revenue by Israel in the earlier part of 2015, contributed to the muted growth. While the withheld revenue was released in the second quarter of 2015, the multiplier effect of delayed wage payments and public spending cuts dampened growth.

17. The unemployment rate declined slightly, but continued to remain alarmingly high. At the end of 2015, 25.8 per cent of the labour force was unemployed, compared with 26.5 per cent the year before. The gains were driven primarily by a decrease in the male unemployment rate in Gaza (from 23.8 to 22.3 per cent), while that for women increased (from 36.5 to 39.7 per cent). The unemployment rates continued to be significantly higher in Gaza (38.4 per cent) than in the West Bank (18.7 per cent).

### **Humanitarian developments**

18. During the reporting period, 218 Palestinians, including 47 children, were killed in direct conflict incidents (the vast majority by Israeli security forces) throughout the occupied Palestinian territory and Israel, and more than 16,000, including 2,800 children, were injured. A total of 127 Palestinian suspected perpetrators, including 30 children, and 28 Israelis<sup>1</sup> were killed in the context of an increase in stabbing, ramming and shooting attacks and alleged attacks by Palestinians against Israeli civilians and members of the security forces, both in the West Bank and in Israel. In the West Bank, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs recorded the highest number of Palestinian casualties since 2005, when it began documenting incidents. In Gaza, 4 Palestinians, including 3 children, were reportedly killed and at least 11 injured in Israeli air strikes, conducted in retaliation for intermittent rocket fire by Palestinian militant groups towards Israel as the ceasefire remained fragile. A total of 23 Palestinians, including a child, were killed and another 1,437, including 137 children, were injured by Israeli forces in protests along the Gaza perimeter fence, mostly in October 2015.

19. The targeting of Israeli civilians by Palestinians and the possible use of excessive force by the Israeli security forces in response to the attacks, in addition to during protests and clashes, were among the protection concerns during the reporting period. Those concerns were compounded by the perceived lack of accountability and effective remedy for the loss of civilian life and property.

20. In the West Bank, there was an increase of 32.6 per cent in the number of Palestinian homes and livelihood-related structures destroyed, dismantled or confiscated by the Israeli authorities, compared with the previous 12 months (from 646 to 857), displacing 1,125 persons, half of them children. February 2016 stood out as having the highest number of structures demolished in a single month (237) since 2009, when the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs began systematically documenting demolitions. Of the structures affected during the reporting period, 31 were demolished or sealed on punitive grounds. That practice targeted the family homes of perpetrators, or alleged perpetrators, of attacks against Israelis.

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<sup>1</sup> Including four Israelis killed in two incidents by two Israeli Arabs; the two perpetrators were also killed.

21. According to the Israel Prison Service, as at the end of January 2016, 402 children (398 boys and 4 girls) between 14 and 17 years of age were being held under Israeli military detention for alleged security violations. In 2015, an average of 219 children were held in Israeli military detention per month, an increase of 15 per cent compared with 2014 (188). The increase coincides with the rise in attacks by Palestinian young people against Israeli civilians that began in late September 2015. Between October and December 2015, the Israeli authorities placed six children from the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, in administrative detention. The practice had not been used against children from East Jerusalem and the rest of the West Bank since 2000 and 2011, respectively.

#### **Movement, humanitarian access and operational space**

22. The United Nations effectively engaged with the Government of Israel on humanitarian access to allow for the unimpeded access of humanitarian assistance. In Gaza, however, restrictions on land and sea access imposed by the Government of Israel remained in place.

23. Access to and movement of Palestinians between most Palestinian urban centres in the West Bank, excluding East Jerusalem, remained restricted. Movement restrictions in the West Bank were significantly tightened following the escalation of violence in October 2015, which involved the deployment of additional obstacles, such as checkpoints and roadblocks, by the Israeli security forces. This represented an increase of 20 per cent in such restrictions compared with the period before the most recent escalation of violence. While many of the additional obstacles have since been removed or eased, the continued restrictions on Palestinian access to land, social services and economic opportunities in East Jerusalem and Area C hinder development efforts, resulting in deteriorating living conditions and increased vulnerability.

24. At least 372 incidents of delayed or denied access by United Nations and non-governmental organization staff members were reported at Israeli checkpoints, affecting 986 staff. Around 98 of the incidents occurred as those staff members crossed the barrier on the Jerusalem periphery.

#### **Barrier**

25. The construction of the barrier continued in the north-west of the Bethlehem Governorate. The Office for the United Nations Register of Damage Caused by the Construction of the Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory established pursuant to General Assembly resolution ES-10/17 continued its outreach and claim intake activities. More than 54,000 claims and 600,000 supporting documents have been collected. Claim intake activities in the Tubas, Jenin, Tulkarem, Qalqiliya, Salfit, Ramallah and Hebron governorates have been completed, while those in the Bethlehem and Jerusalem governorates are at an advanced stage.

### **III. United Nations response**

26. Through the 2015 Humanitarian Response Plan, the United Nations and its partners continued to coordinate and deliver humanitarian and protection assistance to 1.9 million vulnerable Palestinians, in particular in Gaza. The humanitarian strategy is aligned with United Nations development programming.

27. The United Nations implemented the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, a strategic planning framework that guides United Nations development programming for 2014-2017 and is aligned with the Palestinian National Development Plan for 2014-2016: State-building to Sovereignty. It places the Palestinian people at the centre of development programming with the aim of enhancing human security in a context of occupation.

## **A. Human and social development**

28. The United Nations coordinated and delivered humanitarian assistance, including food assistance, to more than 1 million people, water and sanitation assistance to in excess of 1.5 million people and health and nutrition services to some 2.5 million people in the occupied Palestinian territory.

29. United Nations development programming focused on capacity development, infrastructure and the provision of direct assistance and basic services. The work is, as outlined in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, centred on six strategic areas: economic empowerment, livelihoods, decent work and food security; governance, rule of law, justice and human rights; education; health care; social protection; and urban development, natural resource management and infrastructure. The financial resources required for the assistance are estimated at \$2.15 billion, of which \$1.3 billion had been mobilized at the time of writing.

30. Below are illustrative examples of the assistance provided by the United Nations.

### **Education**

31. UNRWA provided free primary education to some 300,000 children enrolled in 353 elementary and preparatory schools throughout Gaza and the West Bank. In Gaza, eight new UNRWA schools were built to address population growth and reduce the number of schools operating on double and triple shifts. Currently, 75.5 per cent of the schools there use such a system, resulting in refugee children having fewer opportunities to engage in recreational and creative pursuits.

32. In the West Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) improved access to education through the rehabilitation of 15 school units in two schools that benefited 736 pupils and a kindergarten that benefited 150 children with disabilities, as well as through the provision of a mobile education resource centre that benefited 1,436 pupils in marginalized communities. In Gaza, UNDP rehabilitated five private schools, two government schools, five training centres and three higher education institutes.

33. United Nations agencies continued to meet capacity-building needs in the areas of inclusive, child-friendly education and early childhood development. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization supported the inclusive education programme, which promotes a human rights-based approach to education. In Gaza, 12 head teachers and teachers from six UNRWA schools and 148 head teachers and teachers from all 96 UNRWA schools in the West Bank benefited from training on inclusive education. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) supported the Ministry of Education and Higher Education in the promotion of active learning teaching methodologies for teachers and supervisors, as well as in the



implementation of a non-violence policy through teacher training and the establishment of conflict resolution mechanisms in schools.

34. UNDP continued to implement the Al Fakhoora Dynamic Futures Programme, supporting 159 scholarships, bringing the total number of scholarships provided to students from Gaza to 604.

### **Health**

35. UNRWA remained a major provider of health-care services, operating 43 health-care facilities, 24 primary health-care centres, six mobile clinics, a hospital and a non-communicable-disease referral centre in Gaza and the West Bank and employing more than 1,800 staff. Annually, an average of 33,086 Palestine refugees in Gaza and 28,351 Palestine refugees in the West Bank received assistance to meet hospital-care costs.

36. United Nations agencies continued to increase access to health by constructing, rehabilitating and equipping health-care facilities throughout Gaza and the West Bank. In Gaza, UNDP rehabilitated a major hospital centre and reconstructed a destroyed medical centre, which serves 70,000 people. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) equipped eight primary health-care centres and six maternity facilities in Gaza with supplies and equipment to ensure the high-quality provision of reproductive health services, reaching 4,881 women, including pregnant women, with reproductive health services in remote and marginalized areas in 12 communities. The World Health Organization (WHO) provided information technology equipment and support to improve the health information management systems in Gaza. In East Jerusalem, UNDP established the first specialized national neurology department at the Makassed Hospital and began to rehabilitate and expand the only national chemotherapy department, at the Augusta Victoria Hospital, while WHO supported improvements in six Palestinian hospitals.

37. WHO supported the Ministry of Health in improving service delivery at the primary health-care level through the implementation of a package of essential non-communicable-disease services in Gaza and the West Bank.

38. In the West Bank, WHO and UNRWA implemented a healthy camp initiative in the Shu'fat refugee camp, building the capacity of five community-based organizations to address and engage in advocacy with regard to environmental health and behavioural health challenges facing the women, children and youth residents.

39. UNICEF and partners reached more than 48.6 per cent of women in the postnatal period through a programme focused on the provision of neonatal health care, including home visits and new equipment for hospitals. UNICEF also continued to support the Ministry of Health to scale up the baby-friendly hospital initiative to encourage exclusive breastfeeding in an additional 10 hospitals, bringing the total number of baby-friendly hospitals to 15.

### **Water and sanitation**

40. UNICEF continued to support the water and sanitation in schools programme, which created improved and sustainable access to safe water and sanitation for some 80,500 pupils by providing technical support to the Ministry of Education and Higher Education.

41. In the West Bank, UNDP improved, constructed or rehabilitated 141 water cisterns and water networks and installed and rehabilitated water storage and distribution units. UNICEF also supported the rehabilitation and construction of water networks, improving access to safe water for 31,000 people.

### **Employment**

42. United Nations agencies continued to support income-generating and self-employment opportunities for vulnerable Palestinians. UNDP supported 2,300 families in Gaza and the West Bank with income-generating and employment-generating activities in small and microenterprise development. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), through 62 women's centres, focused on providing job opportunities in food processing and marketing. The programme directly benefited 773 women workers, while more than 43,400 women benefited indirectly from business training at the centres. A total of 41 of the centres have reached financial sustainability. The activity also benefited 335 schools and more than 108,000 schoolchildren, who received healthy and affordable snacks made by women from the community-based centres. UN-Women also supported 45 women-owned or women-run small, medium-sized and microenterprises through specialized capacity-building as part of a continuous support cycle to integrate women into the local, regional and international markets and ensure their transition from the informal sector to the formal sector. That support benefited 502 workers and family supporters, 93.4 per cent of whom were women. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) supported 27 cooperatives, including 6 women's cooperatives, through activities aimed at increasing productivity and access to local and international markets, thereby helping 1,318 people to achieve improved economic conditions through training to strengthen the production and marketability of their products. FAO, UN-Women and the International Trade Centre, through a joint programme, established a full-service hub to provide guidance to women-owned or women-run small, medium-sized and microenterprises and cooperatives throughout the business development cycle, from capacity-building to enhancing their sales in the local, regional and international markets.

43. The International Labour Organization (ILO) launched a Gaza recovery programme to support those communities most affected by the conflict, including vulnerable families and individuals having lost productive assets or income sources. In partnership with the Gaza Chamber of Commerce, ILO provided 50 small, medium-sized and microenterprise carpenters with small grants, at a total value of \$90,000, for asset replacement services, coupled with a paid three-month job placement scheme for carpenters. It also supported the fishers' union with improved curricula, training on technical skills, job placements, capacity-building on occupational safety and health and direct support to fishers. Moreover, in partnership with local non-governmental organizations, 50 women sheep breeders were trained in the management of sheep farms, life skills, financial and marketing literacy, and cooperative and business group formation.

44. In cooperation with the Islamic University of Gaza, ILO supported the introduction of apprenticeships, the development and improvement of curricula and the development of technical and business management skills for students, including women architects and persons with disabilities. Its work will enable graduates to

meet the needs of the private sector in the reconstruction process and develop livelihoods in agriculture and craftwork.

45. In the West Bank, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), in partnership with the municipality of Hebron and the Ministry of Social Affairs, finalized the establishment of a technical and vocational training centre to empower 100 underprivileged women and their families and improve their living standards through the provision of vocational training, urban entrepreneurship development and economic training programmes and initiatives.

#### **Targeted social protection**

46. In Gaza, UNRWA distributed 393,664 food parcels to 20,453 Palestine refugee households through the social safety net programme. It also distributed 144,518 food parcels and \$1.4 million in supplementary cash assistance to 8,388 Palestine refugee households in the West Bank. The World Food Programme (WFP) supported the social safety net programme, through which it provided more than 195,000 people with food and cash-based transfers.

#### **Culture**

47. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization supported the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage in Gaza and the West Bank through the rehabilitation of 10 historic sites that facilitated accessibility to cultural heritage assets, contributed to the socioeconomic development of targeted communities and helped to develop the technical capacity of local architects, engineers and young professionals in the field of cultural heritage preservation.

48. UNDP supported the cultural tourism industry through the upgrading of the Khan al-Wakalah historical compound in Nablus, which serves as a model for advancing public-private partnerships in the tourism industry at the national level.

#### **Food security and agriculture**

49. FAO improved water availability and management to enhance agricultural production. More than 1,215 farmers benefited from improved access to and management of water through the rehabilitation and enhancement of wells and irrigation systems and the introduction of improved water demand management practices. Consequently, 4,860 dunums of land are now irrigated efficiently.

50. Through the agriculture sector revitalization activities of FAO, 1,318 farmers benefited from intensive training on pest management and global good agricultural practices certification. In addition, 283 members of six women's cooperatives were trained in agricultural production techniques. FAO also supported 317 households to construct small-scale home-based food production units, including vegetable and animal units, providing them with an immediate source of food and a diversified income.

51. In the West Bank, UNDP increased the number of agricultural holdings through the reclamation of at least 1,775 dunums of agricultural land and the construction and rehabilitation of agricultural roads and service roads.

### **Human rights, women, children and young people**

52. Through the UNDP and UN-Women joint rule of law programme, 24,891 individuals, 51 per cent of whom were women, in Gaza and the West Bank benefited from free legal aid provided by civil society organizations. In addition, specialized legal aid services were provided to juveniles in 657 cases through support to the Legal Unit of the Ministry of Social Affairs.

53. United Nations agencies continued to support the special needs of women by tackling gender-based violence. UNFPA focused on the integration of gender-based violence services into the national health system. Through that support, 800 health providers were trained and gained new knowledge and skills with regard to the detection, treatment and referral of gender-based violence cases and became able to respond to cases in primary health-care centres and emergency rooms. More than 3,200 survivors were referred to and provided with legal and psychosocial services by United Nations agencies and partners in Gaza and the West Bank. UNFPA also established a women-friendly safe space in the Jabalia refugee camp in Gaza, where vulnerable women benefit from access to services. UNRWA and UN-Women led wide-reaching activities in Gaza and the West Bank to raise awareness of gender-based violence. UN-Women also provided capacity-building for the 15 special public prosecutors specialized in prosecuting violence against women.

54. United Nations agencies supported youth empowerment programmes, equipping young people with entrepreneurial and civic engagement skills, reaching more than 6,000 people throughout Gaza and the West Bank. UNICEF worked with the Higher Council for Youth and Sports to build the capacity of teachers and trainers to implement skills development programmes for young people.

55. In response to the escalation in violence throughout the West Bank in the fourth quarter of 2015, UNRWA increased programme interventions to mitigate the effects of the current situation on children. Its initiatives included recreational activities, group and individual counselling reaching more than 50,000 pupils and sessions for 400 parents on preventing risky behaviour.

56. UNICEF led the inter-agency working group for the monitoring and reporting of grave violations against children in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory in accordance with Security Council resolutions 1612 (2005) and 1882 (2009). The working group continued to document grave violations and informed programmatic action and advocacy.

### **Environment, housing and urban development**

57. UN-Habitat concluded the implementation of two spatial planning programmes in Area C of the West Bank, including the preparation of 34 detailed local outline plans aimed at reducing the displacement pressure on more than 35,000 Palestinians. It also provided urban planning support to Palestinian communities in East Jerusalem with the aim of securing specific development and building opportunities and rights in order to facilitate the immediate improvement of living conditions and ease displacement pressure. The programme helped to freeze demolition orders for more than 750 buildings and provided new public space in the Sur Bahir neighbourhood.

58. In the West Bank, UNDP completed nine road infrastructure projects, contributing to improved living conditions for at least 40,000 Palestinians, and

created access to electricity for 979 families through the provision of solar units. In addition, it rehabilitated more than 250 homes and supported housing cooperatives, providing increased access to proper and affordable housing for at least 360 families in East Jerusalem. In the Old City of Jerusalem, UNDP rehabilitated more than 17 business centres, improving the economic situation of some 20 families. UN-Habitat finalized the provision of 100 suitable housing units to poor women-headed households and their families in Hebron, including the transfer of title deeds. UNDP continued to advance the construction of the Jericho Agro-Industrial Park through the provision of essential infrastructure services, including water, electricity, buildings and structures, industrial services and telecommunications.

## **B. United Nations system emergency assistance**

59. The United Nations and its partners continued to coordinate and deliver humanitarian assistance in the areas of protection, shelter, food security, water and sanitation, health and nutrition and education, reaching some 1.5 million of the 1.6 million vulnerable Palestinians targeted for assistance in 2015. The majority of the needs were in Gaza and included a significant portion of the residual needs from the conflict of 2014, in particular for shelter. The 2015 Strategic Response Plan mobilized \$416 million of the \$705 million sought (59 per cent).

60. The 2016 Humanitarian Response Plan is seeking \$571 million, of which about 65 per cent of the requirements are for Gaza. That amount is nearly 20 per cent less than the amount requested in 2015, primarily owing to a reduction in shelter needs as the pace of reconstruction increased. The Plan includes \$304 million for the UNRWA Emergency Appeal.

61. The increasing pace of reconstruction notwithstanding, shelter continued to be the primary need, with some 75,000 persons remaining displaced as a result of the damage and destruction of housing stemming from the conflict. As at the end of March 2016, 3,500 of the 18,000 displaced families (19 per cent) had been able to return to homes that had been reconstructed or repaired as a result of cash assistance from United Nations agencies or other international support. The repair and reconstruction of an additional 3,600 homes, or 20 per cent of the caseload, are under way, with many of the homes nearing completion. Funding has been confirmed for some 5,000 families (27 per cent of the caseload) to repair or reconstruct their homes in 2016, leaving a funding gap for nearly 6,000 families (about one third of the caseload).

62. The United Nations Mine Action Service cleared 29 of the 128 sites where it was suspected that aircraft bombs were highly likely to be buried, in order to allow for safe reconstruction to begin.

### **Emergency food support**

63. In Gaza, UNRWA distributed 573,398 food parcels to 146,357 refugee families (more than 800,000 individuals). WFP provided 71,145 food-insecure non-refugees with cash-based transfers and 284,864 non-refugees with in-kind food parcels. Jointly, WFP and UNRWA provided up to 4,800 internally displaced people in shelters until June 2015 with ready-to-eat food assistance. UNICEF and WFP built upon a successful joint e-voucher programme launched after the conflict to continue

to provide emergency food, water, sanitation, hygiene and school uniforms to displaced and other vulnerable families.

64. In the West Bank, WFP assisted 244,000 vulnerable and food-insecure individuals, 105,000 of whom through cash-based transfers and 139,000 through in-kind food distributions. UNRWA and WFP continued their joint in-kind food assistance programme, supporting 34,000 marginalized Bedouin and herders. UNRWA provided cash-based transfers to 47,000 refugees using the WFP voucher platform, for a total value of \$4.2 million, spent on fresh food and other staples in local shops.

#### **Emergency income generation**

65. In Gaza, the UNRWA job creation programme provided 8,281 jobs, while more than 6,800 direct and indirect jobs were created through UNRWA construction projects. In the West Bank, UNRWA provided emergency cash-for-work support to some 7,000 households (42,120 individuals) in 19 Palestine refugee camps. This provided a cash injection of some \$7.6 million to food-insecure households. Owing to a shortage of funds, UNRWA has since 2014 no longer been operating the cash-for-work programme outside the camps, but continues to support non-camp refugees with electronic food vouchers.

66. UNDP continued to support emergency income-generating activities in Gaza, including solid waste primary collection services, which benefited 4,000 workers supporting 20,800 dependants.

#### **Emergency health support**

67. Through UNFPA support, 12,676 women were provided with psychosocial support in Gaza and the West Bank. To respond to the psychosocial impact of the conflict in Gaza, UNRWA supported individual counselling sessions, benefiting 13,581 Palestine refugees, and 9,463 group counselling sessions. UNICEF and its implementing partners were able to reach 85,881 children (42,725 girls and 43,156 boys) with psychosocial support, including through individual and group counselling, in Gaza. In the West Bank, the UNRWA emergency health programme supported six mobile health clinics operating in 56 locations with poor access to primary health care. The clinics served some 22,000 individuals and delivered close to 87,400 patient consultations throughout the year. In addition, UNRWA supported 49 Bedouin and herder communities in Area C through mobile community mental health services, providing some 10,500 individuals with monthly access to psychosocial and mental health support. The initiative included vulnerable communities located in military zones, those in close proximity to settlements and those threatened with demolition.

68. WHO procured emergency medical supplies to address shortages, improve service delivery and strengthen emergency preparedness in Gaza. It responded to a seasonal influenza outbreak by mobilizing antiviral treatment and laboratory supplies needed for diagnostic testing. WHO conducted training workshops on emergency risk communication for 30 health workers engaged in school health, community health, health services, environmental health and media communications, as well as providing specialized training on the management of severe acute respiratory infections for 47 front-line clinicians working in intensive care units and emergency rooms of public hospitals.

### **Emergency water and sanitation support**

69. In Gaza, UNICEF supported the Coastal Municipalities Water Utility to conduct repairs and upgrade water and wastewater networks, pumping stations and water wells, in addition to improving water storage capacity through the distribution of drinking and domestic water storage tanks. Through its partners, UNICEF delivered safe drinking water to 73,030 people using tankers. It also continued to improve access to water by supporting the Palestinian Water Authority and the Utility in the construction of a seawater desalination plant in southern Gaza, which is expected to serve 75,000 people.

70. UNRWA supported water and sanitation and health-care providers operating inside and outside the Palestine refugee camps in Gaza with fuel and other supplies to ensure the functioning of wastewater and solid waste management and to reduce the risk of UNRWA water wells being affected by power outages. In addition, UNRWA repaired two water and sanitation installations.

### **Emergency agriculture support**

71. FAO responded to outbreaks of avian influenza by providing in-kind support to the Ministry of Agriculture in Gaza and the West Bank to assess the gaps, obstacles and opportunities with regard to developing national preparedness efforts for future outbreaks.

72. FAO continued to restore access to assets and resources for 4,620 households through the rehabilitation of six wells and 12 damaged greenhouses in Gaza, the distribution of organic fertilizer for 13,000 dunums of land in the West Bank and the repair of 706 animal shelters in Gaza and the West Bank. It improved access to livelihood assets and resources for more than 8,300 farmers, herders and rural households through the rehabilitation and improvement of cisterns for livestock and farming use.

### **Emergency education support**

73. UNICEF, through its partners, supported safe and protected access to children in violence flashpoints such as Hebron, East Jerusalem and Nablus.

74. The United Nations Mine Action Service, UNICEF and UNRWA, along with community-based organizations, worked to ensure that risk education regarding explosive remnants of war was institutionalized in schools throughout Gaza. The Service and UNRWA trained 941 teachers to deliver that risk education. The Service also provided direct risk education to 22,500 beneficiaries.

### **Emergency housing support**

75. In Gaza, the United Nations Mine Action Service conducted 602 risk assessments and properly disposed of more than 235 items of suspected explosive ordnance, enabling UNDP to clear 1 million tons of rubble without any incidents, even though operations were conducted in heavily contaminated areas.

76. The United Nations Office for Project Services continued to operate a materials monitoring unit, in close coordination with the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, to enable the implementation of the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism. It facilitated the entry of

more than 1 million tons of construction materials into Gaza. To date, 450 large-scale construction projects have benefited from the use of those materials and more than 100,000 individual beneficiaries have been able to purchase materials to repair their damaged homes.

77. In Gaza, UNRWA disbursed more than \$140.6 million, allowing 80,000 families to repair or reconstruct their homes. As part of that assistance package, it distributed monthly transitional shelter cash assistance to close to 9,000 Palestine refugee families whose shelters had been rendered uninhabitable. UNDP also provided \$6 million in cash assistance to nearly 4,000 non-refugee families displaced by the conflict, allowing them to have access to temporary shelter while their homes were being reconstructed. UNDP supported the rehabilitation of in excess of 1,200 partially damaged homes housing some 7,200 Palestinians. In the West Bank, UNRWA provided cash assistance to 73 refugee families (some 395 individuals) following home demolitions by the Israeli authorities. It also provided 824 refugee families with cash assistance and referrals following search-and-arrest operations by Israeli security forces, which often led to physical damage to their homes.

### **C. United Nations system support to Palestinian institutions**

78. The United Nations country team established a Gaza reconstruction and recovery coordination group in order to strengthen the coordination of United Nations and non-governmental organization reconstruction and recovery activities and to support the government-led Gaza reconstruction team in the implementation of the detailed needs assessment and recovery framework for Gaza.

79. In Gaza, UN-Habitat supported the Ministry of Public Works and Housing and the municipality of Khuza'ah to review and develop new detailed outline plans for two heavily damaged neighbourhoods and an overall revised master plan in an integrated, participatory manner that included accommodation of key infrastructure, public space, future demographic growth, environmental sustainability and other innovative planning concepts.

80. UNDP and UN-Women provided support to justice and security institutions, including the Ministry of Justice and the High Judicial Council, in mainstreaming a gender perspective in policies and planning processes, including in the area of law-making. As part of joint programme efforts to develop specialized justice and security services for women and girls, 19 senior officers of the Palestinian Civil Police concluded an accredited professional diploma course in public administration and gender delivered by Birzeit University.

81. WFP supported the Civil Defence in building capacity in the area of emergency preparedness and disaster risk reduction, focusing on information management systems and coordination in emergencies. WFP delivered tools, technical training sessions and simulations on emergency information management to increase the Government's capacity to anticipate and respond to external shocks. Cooperation also included the development of a public awareness tool and an early warning system and the establishment of three emergency operation centres at the governorate level to expand the ability of the Civil Defence to coordinate and respond to large-scale natural disasters.



82. The United Nations Office for Project Services initiated a three-year programme to build the capacity of the Ministry of the Interior in civilian oversight of the State security functions. The Ministry and the 17 Palestinian security entities have re-engineered key processes to reinforce the governance of the Ministry with regard to legal services, strategic planning, human resources, complaints processing and media and public relations. All the re-engineered processes are now linked to civilian oversight mechanisms.

83. UNFPA strengthened the capacity of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics in the preparations for the 2017 population census. With UNICEF support, the Central Bureau successfully launched and completed the fifth round of the multiple indicator cluster survey, in time for final reporting on the Millennium Development Goals.

84. ILO supported the establishment of the first social security system for private sector workers and their family members, together with a new social security law based on international labour standards and best practice. The law was endorsed by the Cabinet and thereafter signed by the President, Mahmoud Abbas.

85. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, working with other United Nations agencies, provided technical assistance and training to the Government to implement, monitor and report on the seven core international human rights treaties acceded to in 2014. Its support included a series of thematic workshops on reporting guidelines and technical guidance on workplans for responsible line ministries.

#### **D. Private sector development**

86. In Gaza, UNRWA financed 3,678 loans, valued at nearly \$5.5 million, to Palestinian businesses and households in 2015. A total of 3,221 loans, valued at nearly \$5 million, were provided to Palestine refugees, while 1,490 loans, valued at \$1.5 million, were extended to women. In the West Bank, 11,888 loans, valued at \$15.6 million, were financed, with Palestine refugees receiving 23 per cent of them (\$3.5 million). Women received 38 per cent of the loans (4,454 loans, valued at \$4.8 million), and young people between 18 and 30 years of age received 40 per cent (4,725 loans, valued at \$5.7 million).

#### **E. Coordination of United Nations assistance**

87. Under the auspices of the Deputy Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process/United Nations Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator, collaboration and coordination between the numerous donor and United Nations forums were strengthened. The humanitarian country team met regularly to agree on humanitarian advocacy and response measures. With the support of the Coordination Unit within the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, the United Nations country team continued to coordinate its United Nations Development Action Framework programming, in alignment with the priorities of the Palestinian National Development Plan for 2014-2016: State-building to Sovereignty. Efforts to forge constructive partnerships between the United Nations, the Government and the broader aid community were strengthened. The United Nations continued the preparation of regular Ad Hoc

Liaison Committee reports, strategies and guidance for development and humanitarian work in Gaza, East Jerusalem and Area C and, together with other humanitarian actors, the 2016 Humanitarian Response Plan.

## **IV. Donor response to the crisis**

### **Budgetary and fiscal support**

88. The fiscal position of the Government remained fragile. The Government improved its fiscal performance on the revenue and expenditure sides during the year, reducing its recurrent fiscal deficit from 12.5 per cent of GDP in 2014 to an estimated 11.7 per cent in 2015. Direct budget support by donors declined, however, leaving a large financing gap and increasing public debt. According to the International Monetary Fund, direct donor support fell by about a third in 2015 and reached its lowest nominal level since 2008, leaving the Government's budget in an increasingly precarious position.

### **Donor coordination**

89. The Coordination Unit within the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process supported the United Nations system and prepared substantive contributions for various forums, such as the twice-yearly meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee. The Unit also coordinated policy positions and addressed impediments to the implementation of programmes with key donors and outside actors.

90. United Nations agencies continued to support the Government in the development of a national policy agenda for the period 2017-2022, which would outline development priorities and be complemented by sector strategies.

91. The local aid coordination structure continued to serve as a key forum for donors and the State of Palestine. The coordination of humanitarian assistance and advocacy continued to be led by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

92. The Ad Hoc Liaison Committee met once during the reporting period, on 30 September 2015 in New York.

## **V. Unmet needs**

93. Of the \$5.4 billion pledged in Cairo for the recovery and reconstruction of Gaza in October 2014, some 39 per cent has been disbursed. However, only \$17 million has gone towards financing the productive sector needs identified in the detailed needs assessment and recovery framework for Gaza (less than 3 per cent of the \$602 million needed).

94. Given the continued humanitarian needs, the 2016 Humanitarian Response Plan is requesting \$571 million, of which \$304 million is also included in the UNRWA Emergency Appeal. To date, only 15 per cent has been raised. In addition to the needs identified in the Plan, UNRWA is seeking an additional \$99 million (for a total Emergency Appeal for 2016 of \$405 million) to meet shelter, social safety net and other needs in Gaza, as well as provide food assistance and cash-for-work

programmes in the West Bank. Additional support is also urgently needed for the UNRWA core budget, which faces a predicted shortfall of \$81 million in 2016.

95. United Nations agencies are seeking \$2.15 billion to support development programming in the context of the United Nations Development Action Framework, of which 60 per cent has been funded to date.

## **VI. Challenges**

96. The operating environment remained challenging, owing largely to restrictions on access and movement, including the closures in Gaza. Humanitarian space and the ability of United Nations organizations and partners to deliver timely assistance were limited at times by physical barriers such as checkpoints, a restrictive permit policy for humanitarian personnel and restrictions on the import of materials into Gaza.

97. In the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, restrictions on movement and access, demolitions of Palestinian infrastructure and the associated displacement of Palestinians all increased. Furthermore, significant settlement activity continued to take place, contributing to an escalation of tensions on the ground. While not directly targeted in the context of the increased violence that began in October 2015, United Nations personnel and dependants became more exposed to risk. United Nations movements were affected by increased closures and search operations at checkpoints and locations of security incidents, including improvised checkpoints set up by the Israeli security forces in East Jerusalem in October 2015.

98. United Nations agencies focused in particular on the reconstruction and recovery of Gaza. While the temporary Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism is functioning, reconstruction in several sectors is occurring at a slower pace owing to the lack of financing. The lack of progress on intra-Palestinian reconciliation, including civil service reform — an important condition for donor support for the reconstruction of Gaza emphasized at the conference held in Cairo in October 2014 — has also generated its own set of challenges in Gaza.

## **VII. Conclusions**

99. The operational context for the work of the United Nations during the reporting period was increasingly challenging owing to the enormous task of supporting the recovery and reconstruction of Gaza following the conflict of 2014, in addition to the continued threats to the livelihoods of Palestinians, especially demolitions, and the ongoing restrictions, which posed formidable obstacles to development. The United Nations will continue to work towards the realization of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 1397 (2002), 1515 (2003), 1850 (2008) and 1860 (2009), an end to the occupation that began in 1967 and the establishment of a sovereign, democratic, viable and contiguous Palestinian State, existing side by side in peace with a secure Israel.



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**Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance**

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Agenda item 14

**Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations**

## Assistance to the Palestinian People

### Report of the Secretary-General

#### *Summary*

The present report, submitted in compliance with General Assembly resolution [71/126](#), contains an assessment of the assistance received by the Palestinian people and an assessment of needs still unmet and proposals for responding to them. It provides a description of efforts made by the United Nations, in cooperation with the Government, donors and civil society, to support the Palestinian population and institutions.

During the reporting period (April 2016-March 2017), negative trends on the ground continued, affecting the prospects for peace and realization of the two-State solution. The United Nations continued its efforts to respond to humanitarian and development challenges in the context of occupation.

The 2017 Humanitarian Response Plan, requiring \$547 million, outlines the programming to address urgent humanitarian needs throughout the occupied Palestinian territory. In addition, following the damage incurred during the 2014 hostilities, the detailed needs assessment and recovery framework for Gaza estimated needs of \$3.9 billion for reconstruction and recovery in Gaza.

The Government of the State of Palestine continued to implement the Palestinian National Development Plan 2014-2016: State-building to Sovereignty and, on 22 February 2017, launched the national policy agenda for 2017-2022. The national policy agenda has three pillars: path to independence, Government reform and sustainable development. It identifies 29 national policies. In the agenda, citizens are “put first” and many of its priorities are aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In support of those efforts, the United Nations continued to implement the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for 2014-2017.

\* [A/72/50](#).



## I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted in compliance with General Assembly resolution 71/126, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it, at its seventy-second session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of that resolution, containing an assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people and an assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them. The reporting period is from April 2016 to March 2017.

2. Information on the living and socioeconomic conditions of the Palestinian people is provided in several reports prepared by other United Nations agencies and submitted to various United Nations bodies, in particular: the annual report on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan; the annual report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) (A/71/13); *Common Country Analysis 2016: Leave No One Behind — A Perspective on Vulnerability and Structural Disadvantage in Palestine* (United Nations country team, occupied Palestinian territory, 2016); and the reports of the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee in April and September 2016.

3. The humanitarian, economic and development needs of the Palestinian people are reflected in several complementary strategic and resource mobilization documents. The 2017 Humanitarian Response Plan seeks \$547 million to address the most urgent humanitarian needs, including by enhancing the protective environment and improving access to essential services for the most vulnerable groups throughout the occupied Palestinian territory. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework for 2014-2017 presents the United Nations strategic response to Palestinian development priorities contained in the Palestinian National Development Plan for 2014-2016: State-building to Sovereignty.

4. Throughout the year, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process continued its efforts to support the peace process and to promote coordination and dialogue between Palestinians and Israelis, the United Nations, the region and the international community.

## II. Overview of the current situation

### A. Political context

5. The reporting period was characterized by a significant decline in the levels of violence and attacks compared with the period October 2015-March 2016, when tensions were significantly higher. Attacks by Palestinians against Israelis, including by stabbing and vehicle ramming, and the incitement that encourages such acts, continued, albeit at a lower level. Settlement activities showed an upward trend, and the rates of demolitions of Palestinian-owned structures remained high. Palestinian divisions persisted, despite efforts to advance reconciliation, and continue to have negative implications on economic, humanitarian and political aspects of life in the occupied Palestinian territory.

6. Several steps were taken by the international community during the reporting period with the aim of reviving the peace process. On 1 July 2016, the Quartet published a report in which it reaffirmed the support of the international community

for a negotiated two-State solution, reviewed the main trends on the ground that currently pose a serious threat to that vision, and recommended steps for the parties to take in order to create conditions that would allow a return to meaningful negotiations. On 23 December 2016, the Security Council adopted resolution 2334 (2016), in which it reiterated its demand that Israel immediately and completely cease all settlement activities, called for immediate steps to prevent all acts of violence against civilians, including acts of terror, as well as all acts of provocation and destruction, and called upon both parties to refrain from provocative actions, incitement and inflammatory rhetoric. On 15 January 2017, France hosted a conference in Paris to support the peace process, which was attended by representatives of some 70 countries.

7. Internal tensions in the Israeli Government grew as the 26 December 2016 deadline set by the Israeli High Court of Justice for the demolition of the illegal outpost of Amona approached. While their efforts to prevent the demolition of Amona failed, members of the Knesset who support settlement expansion successfully pressured coalition parties to vote in favour of the “regularization bill”. The bill met with opposition from the Attorney General of Israel, who deemed it unconstitutional and a violation of international law. If implemented, the law would effectively authorize the appropriation of privately owned Palestinian land that has been used for building thousands of homes in settlements. Its adoption marks a significant shift in the long-standing Israeli position concerning the legal status of the occupied territory. Since its approval on 6 February 2017, several petitions have been filed against it before the High Court of Justice, and its implementation is likely to remain on hold until a judgment has been passed.

8. There was a significant increase in settlement activities during the reporting period. According to official statistics, the second quarter of 2016 saw construction of 1,102 housing units in Area C, the highest quarterly figure during the current term of the Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu. Between April and December 2016, construction started for 2,215 units, almost double the figure for the equivalent period in 2015 (1,167). Planning of new housing units also advanced throughout most of the reporting period, particularly during the first quarter of 2017, when 4,000 housing units were advanced in Area C, with some 250 reaching final approval stage and tenders being issued for another 800. By comparison, the total number of units advanced, approved and tendered for in 2016 was around 3,000. In East Jerusalem, plans for around 1,500 housing units were advanced, yet none reached the final stage of approval. Tenders for 320 units were issued in 2016, marking a decline compared with 580 in 2015 and over 2,000 each year during the period 2012-2014. Evictions of Palestinians from their homes in East Jerusalem as a result of legal moves by settler organizations continued, enlarging the Jewish enclaves in Palestinian neighbourhoods of the city. Dozens of Palestinian herder and Bedouin communities in Area C continued to face pressure to relocate from Israeli authorities, citing a lack of building permits, which are nearly impossible for Palestinians to obtain. Some communities are under imminent threat of being forced to relocate to other Area C locations.

9. Reconciliation talks between Fatah and Hamas failed to achieve progress during the reporting period. The parties continue to disagree on the two main issues under discussion: formation of a national unity Government and the organization of parliamentary and presidential elections. In an effort to promote reconciliation, the President, Mahmoud Abbas, held a meeting with the Chair of the Hamas Political Bureau, Khalid Mish'al, in Qatar in October 2016. Subsequently, representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization, Hamas and Islamic Jihad agreed, in a meeting held in Beirut in January 2017, on the need to start consultations to form a national unity Government that would work to implement previous reconciliation deals, end

the Palestinian division and prepare for general elections. Also in January, the Russian Federation sought to advance Palestinian reconciliation by hosting a meeting between the Palestinian factions in Moscow. Despite those inter-factional meetings, the sides remain unable to reach consensus on achieving genuine Palestinian unity, on the basis of non-violence, democracy and the Palestine Liberation Organization principles. In another setback to achieving unity, Hamas established the Administrative Committee, a parallel institution to run local ministries in Gaza, on 16 March 2017. Disputes between the Palestinian Authority and Hamas over responsibilities aggravated the electricity crisis in Gaza in January 2017.

10. Municipal elections originally set for October 2016 were postponed for four months after the Palestinian High Court ruled against the Government's arrangement for conducting the elections in Gaza. The Government subsequently established a designated electoral court to resolve the issue of the "illegal" courts in Gaza; Hamas rejected that decision and expressed dissatisfaction with the Government's failure to hold municipal elections in 2016. Municipal elections are now expected to be held exclusively in the West Bank on 13 May 2017.

11. Socioeconomic hardship, underpinned by the persistent occupation and fragile democratic institutions, continued to affect stability in the West Bank and threatened to erode the achievements of the Palestinian State-building agenda. During the second half of 2016, frequent clashes occurred between Palestinian security forces and residents of the Balata refugee camp in Nablus and in the nearby Old City, causing fatalities and injuries to both civilians and security personnel. Those clashes came in the context of increased Palestinian law and order operations in and around the camp and were particularly severe amid political tensions before and after Fatah's seventh party congress at the end of November 2016.

12. The ceasefire that brought an end to the hostilities between Israel and Palestinian armed groups in Gaza on 26 August 2014 has held but remains fragile. There were fewer incidents of demonstrations along the security fence between Gaza and Israel and fewer incidents of cross-border shootings compared to the previous reporting period. In April and May 2016, Israeli security forces discovered two tunnels penetrating its territory from Gaza, leading in one case to a temporary escalation of hostilities in which militants fired 40 mortars and eight rockets at Israel and Israeli forces. One Palestinian was killed as a result of subsequent Israeli strikes. In total, 12 rockets that were fired indiscriminately from Gaza landed in Israel without causing casualties.

13. The United Nations continued to support the Palestinian Government in implementing its \$3.9 billion framework for reconstruction and recovery in Gaza. The vast majority of damage to schools, hospitals and water and electricity facilities have been repaired, with the reconstruction of six totally destroyed schools, a clinic and a hospital still ongoing. Meanwhile, 40,000 people remain internally displaced inside Gaza, waiting for their homes to be rebuilt. Of the 17,800 homes which were totally destroyed or severely damaged to the point of being uninhabitable, 57 per cent have been rebuilt and reconstruction work is ongoing on another 14 per cent. However, \$115 million is still lacking for the reconstruction of more than 2,800 totally destroyed homes. Of the 153,200 homes which were partially damaged in 2014, 56 per cent have been repaired and work is ongoing to repair another 7 per cent. However, \$85 million is still needed for the remaining repairs.

14. The temporary Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism continued to facilitate the entry of material considered by Israel as having dual civil-military use. In the reporting period, nearly 750,000 tons of cement entered Gaza through the Mechanism, an 18 per cent increase compared to the previous year. The increase happened despite new restrictions on cement in 2016, including a six-week

suspension of private-sector cement imports through the Mechanism in April and May 2016, and an artificial ceiling of 90 trucks of cement per day for the remainder of the year. Meanwhile, the import of “dual-use” items, other than cement and rebar, remains strictly curtailed, with only 285 items approved during the fourth quarter of 2016, compared to 1,796 items during 2015.

15. The Palestinian Authority and the Government of Israel have taken several affirmative steps during the reporting period, some in line with the recommendations of the Quartet report. These include agreements on water infrastructure in the West Bank, electricity, 3G and postal services, which all have the potential to strengthen Palestinian civil authority. Implementation of those agreements, however, has been slow.

## **B. Humanitarian and socioeconomic context**

### **Economic and fiscal developments**

16. Economic conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory were characterized by continued recovery from the conflict in 2014. Real gross domestic product (GDP) increased by 4.1 per cent over 2015 levels, as compared with 3.4 per cent growth in 2015. Overall growth was driven by 3.0 per cent growth in the West Bank and 7.7 per cent growth in Gaza. This resulted in positive growth in per capita GDP in both Gaza (4.2 per cent) and the West Bank (0.5 per cent).

17. In 2016, 26.9 per cent of the labour force was unemployed, compared to 25.9 per cent the year before. Unemployment increased in both Gaza (from 41.0 per cent to 41.7 per cent) and the West Bank (from 17.3 per cent to 18.2 per cent). Youth unemployment continued to be the defining challenge of the Palestinian labour market. In 2016, 43.2 per cent of the labour force in the 20-24 age group was unemployed.

### **Humanitarian developments**

18. During the reporting period, 60 Palestinians, including 15 children, were killed in direct conflict incidents (the vast majority by Israeli security forces) across the occupied Palestinian territory and Israel, and some 2,200 Palestinians, including 600 children, were injured. Thirty-four suspected Palestinian perpetrators, including seven children, and 12 Israelis were killed in the context of stabbing, ramming and shootings attacks. This marks a major decline in violence across the West Bank, compared to the previous reporting period.

19. The targeting of Israeli civilians by Palestinians, and the possible use of excessive force in the Israeli security forces' response to these attacks, as well as during protests and clashes, has remained a key protection concern, compounded by the perceived lack of accountability and effective remedies for the loss of civilian life and property.

20. In the West Bank, the reporting period witnessed a 10 per cent decline in the number of Palestinian homes and livelihood-related structures destroyed or seized, compared to the previous reporting period, which witnessed a record number of such incidents since 2008, when the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs began documenting demolitions. During the reporting period, 1,244 people (one half of them children) were affected by the demolition or sealing of 21 family homes of perpetrators, or alleged perpetrators, of attacks against Israelis.

21. As of February 2017, there were 335 Palestinian children in Israel Prison Service facilities (323 boys and 12 girls). Of them, 2 were under administrative



detention, 217 in various stages of their prosecution, and 116 already convicted and serving their sentences. These numbers reflect a downward trend during the reporting period. Between January and April 2016, on average, 426 children were held in Israeli military detention per month, which marked a 95 per cent increase compared to the monthly average in 2015 (219 children). During the reporting period, UNRWA referred over 60 cases of detained children to legal support and other services.

22. On 31 May 2016, Hamas executed three men charged with murder, the first executions since early 2014. The executions were implemented without the approval of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, required under Palestinian law. During the reporting period, 22 new death sentences were passed by Gaza courts: 13 by civil courts against people convicted of murder and 9 by military courts against people convicted of treason; 13 death sentences were confirmed on appeal.

### **Movement, humanitarian access and operational space**

23. In Gaza, restrictions on land and sea access imposed by the Government of Israel remained in place. Access of United Nations and non-governmental organization staff members to and from Gaza deteriorated during the reporting period, and denial by Israel of duty-related entry and exit permits for national staff reached concerning levels. While some measures have eased restrictions, obstructive policies on access and movement of Palestinian staff to and from Gaza largely remained in place.

24. During the reporting period, at least 289 reported incidents of delayed or denied access of United Nations and non-governmental organization staff members were reported at Israeli checkpoints, affecting 1,834 staff members. Around 41 of these took place as United Nations and non-governmental organization staff members crossed the Israeli-controlled Erez crossing to and from Gaza.

25. Access to and movement of Palestinians between most Palestinian urban centres in the West Bank, excluding East Jerusalem, remained restricted. The continued restrictions on Palestinian access to land, social services and economic opportunities in East Jerusalem and Area C hinder development efforts and severely constrain efforts to improve living conditions and reduce vulnerability.

26. Following the assassination of one of its militant leaders in Gaza on 24 March 2017, Hamas, in an unprecedented move, imposed a 10-day ban on movement from Gaza to Israel, except for select categories, including patients referred for medical treatment outside Gaza, relatives of Palestinian prisoners in Israel and three ministers of the Palestinian Government of national consensus. During the closure, fishing was also prohibited, resulting in the cancellation of over 5,000 fishing trips, thereby undermining the livelihoods of some 1,500 fishermen's families already affected by the six-mile access limit imposed by Israel. In addition, 111 patients were denied exit from Gaza to Israel by Hamas.

### **Barrier**

27. The Office for the United Nations Register of Damage Caused by the Construction of the Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, established pursuant to the General Assembly resolution ES-10/17 of 24 January 2007, continued its outreach and claim intake activities. More than 61,000 claims and over 650,000 supporting documents have been collected. Claim intake activities have been completed in eight out of nine affected Palestinian governorates — Tubas, Jenin, Tulkarem, Qalqiliya, Salfit, Ramallah, Hebron and Bethlehem — and work is at an advanced stage in the Jerusalem governorate, including in and around East Jerusalem.

### III. United Nations response

#### A. Human and social development

28. During the reporting period, the United Nations coordinated and delivered humanitarian assistance, including food assistance, to over 1.58 million people, protection assistance to nearly 1 million people, health and nutrition services to over 1.2 million people, water and sanitation to over 600,000 people, and over 150,000 people received some form of shelter and non-food item assistance.

29. As outlined in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, United Nations development programming centred on six strategic areas: economic empowerment, livelihoods, decent work and food security; governance, rule of law, justice and human rights; education; health; social protection; and urban development, natural resource management and infrastructure.

##### Education

30. UNRWA provided free primary education to over 310,000 students enrolled in 363 elementary and preparatory schools in Gaza and the West Bank.

31. United Nations agencies continued to meet teachers' capacity-building needs in the area of quality, inclusive and child-friendly education. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) supported the training of teachers on the implementation of a non-violence policy through teacher training in the West Bank and Gaza. UNICEF training of teachers and principals on early childhood development practices benefited over 1,700 children in 49 targeted schools in the West Bank and Gaza.

32. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) scaled up the Al Fakhoora Dynamic Futures programme, supporting an additional 266 scholarships, which brought the total number of scholarships to 870.

33. United Nations agencies supported access to education through the construction and rehabilitation of education facilities, including the construction of a boys' school in Jerusalem and 12 community libraries in the West Bank and Gaza, and the rehabilitation of five kindergartens.

34. In Gaza, UNDP improved access to quality education for 88,311 students (43,997 female and 44,314 male) through the rehabilitation and reconstruction of 37 institutions which sustained substantial damage in the 2014 hostilities, including 12 partially damaged public schools, 13 private schools, 5 training centres and 7 higher education institutions. Similarly, UNRWA supported the construction or reconstruction of 10 new schools. The reconstruction and rehabilitation of schools was inspired by principles of "Building back better" and child-friendly schools.

##### Health

35. UNRWA provided health-care services in the West Bank through 43 health-care facilities, including six mobile clinics, 24 primary health-care centres, one hospital and one non-communicable disease referral centre, employing over 800 staff. In Gaza, health-care services were provided through 22 primary health-care facilities employing over 961 staff. Annually, an average of 27,795 Palestine refugees in the West Bank and 13,053 Palestine refugees in Gaza received assistance for hospital-care costs.

36. UNICEF continued to support the Ministry of Health to scale up the baby-friendly hospital initiative to encourage exclusive breastfeeding, training 55 nurses (30 men and 25 women) and doctors. By the end of 2016, nine maternity wards were certified as part of the initiative in the West Bank and Gaza. A total of 7,481 women and their newborns, and 60 midwives, were trained by UNICEF on the provision of postnatal home-visiting services. The World Health Organization (WHO) trained over 300 Ministry of Health personnel and health-care providers in reproductive health.

37. United Nations agencies contributed to health sector infrastructure through the upgrading of the chemotherapy department of a private hospital in East Jerusalem to serve at least 1,500 patients annually, the rehabilitation of the Princess Basma Centre for children with special needs and provision of surgical and medical equipment to five hospitals in Jerusalem and the West Bank. They also ensured that 10,214 uninsured or partially uninsured patients received subsidized health care at three main hospitals in Jerusalem. Equipment was provided to three primary health-care clinics and one hospital specialized in detecting, treating and referring cases of gender-based violence. WHO supported the Ministry of Health in the provision of essential equipment and training to improve breast cancer screening.

38. To respond to shortages in health supplies in Gaza, WHO assisted in filling urgent gaps of essential drugs, coordinated delivery of medical supplies from various donors and distributed fuel to health facilities to ensure continuity of health emergency services. UNDP expanded, rehabilitated and equipped medical facilities in Gaza, including the construction of neonatal intensive care units, increasing the overall capacity of neonatal services in Gaza to benefit 6,177 newborns.

### **Water and sanitation**

39. UNICEF continued to support water, sanitation and hygiene efforts in schools, with 128,500 children (50 per cent of whom were girls) participating in hygiene promotion in 156 primary schools (116 in Gaza and 40 in the West Bank). In 2016, around 68,500 children from those same schools also received tankered water. An additional 237 schools (135 in Gaza and 102 in the West Bank) used the UNICEF-Ministry of Education and Higher Education hygiene education manual to promote key hygiene practices. A total of 1,734 hygiene kits were distributed in the West Bank and 176,000 in Gaza.

40. In Area C, at least 4,200 Palestinians benefited from the rehabilitation of a water network that reduced water loss to zero and the cost of water by 40 per cent. UNDP rehabilitated and expanded the landfill in Jericho city and built a recovery facility that will be used for sorting and recycling solid waste in the Jericho area. The total number of beneficiaries is around 62,000 residents in Jericho city and the Jordan River valley area.

41. In Gaza, UNICEF, in close partnership with the Palestinian Water Authority and the Coastal Municipalities Water Utility, increased access to safe drinking water for 75,000 people through the construction of the first phase of a desalination plant. UNDP improved the water, wastewater supply and wastewater system through the construction of infrastructure works.

### **Employment**

42. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and the International Trade Centre, through a joint programme, established a full-service hub, which provides guidance to women-owned or women-run small, medium-sized and microenterprises and cooperatives through the

business development cycle. FAO continued to support 27 cooperatives (including six women's cooperatives) through activities aimed at increasing productivity and access to local as well as international markets, benefiting 1,318 people. In Gaza, the International Labour Organization supported capacity-building and business plan development for two cooperatives.

43. UN-Women supported 45 women-owned or women-run small, medium-sized and microenterprises, with 34 such enterprises given grants to enhance their businesses. The reporting period saw the 45 enterprises experience a 28 per cent increase in sales in the local market, a 4 per cent increase regionally and a 5 per cent increase internationally. In addition, there was a 21 per cent increase in the number of women employed full-time by targeted small, medium-sized and microenterprises (158 employees) compared to the previous reporting period.

44. UNDP provided skill-enhancement programmes to 200 young people in Jerusalem. 169 graduates from East Jerusalem were placed in employment, 131 of whom (78 per cent) were employed on a permanent basis (84 female and 47 male). An additional 28 marginalized families were economically supported in East Jerusalem through small-business grants. Through its infrastructure works, UNDP generated 11,741 working days in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, and 13,910 temporary working days and 554 permanent working days in Gaza.

#### **Targeted social protection**

45. During the reporting period, UNRWA distributed 394,634 food parcels to 20,623 Palestine refugee households (98,935 individuals) in Gaza, and UNICEF and the World Food Programme (WFP) continued to implement the e-voucher programme targeting the most vulnerable Palestinians through the provision of emergency food, water, sanitation and hygiene items, and school uniforms, reaching approximately 13,000 households with hygiene kits and 8,083 children with education assistance. Of those that benefited, approximately 4,000 households gained new knowledge about good nutrition and hygiene practices through a 12-week awareness-raising course. Through its winterization initiative in Gaza, UNICEF provided 620 households with e-vouchers for water, sanitation and hygiene and winterization items.

46. WFP continued to support the Government's social safety net programme, under which 213,000 people in Gaza and the West Bank received food and cash-based transfers. UNRWA provided cash-based assistance to over 36,000 beneficiaries.

#### **Culture**

47. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) supported the conservation and promotion of cultural heritage in the West Bank and Gaza through the rehabilitation of 11 historic sites, facilitating accessibility to cultural heritage assets and public social services.

48. UNDP supported the cultural tourism industry through operation and management services for the Khan al-Wakalah historical compound in Nablus and started the rehabilitation, restoration and operation and management services for Maqam-En Nabi Musa in Area C of the Jericho governorate. Both sites are anticipated to receive 140,000 visitors annually, creating 1,800 direct and indirect job opportunities. The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) supported the rehabilitation of the Dar al-Consul Complex in East Jerusalem, which provides residents and tourists with a state-of-the-art, modern and safe civic centre. The Dar al-Consul facilities and services include a one-stop shop for young people and tourists.

49. UNDP supported a total of 541 young Palestinians from 14 municipal schools in East Jerusalem to benefit from cultural activities during the reporting period.

#### **Food security and agriculture**

50. FAO supported 1,318 farmers through improved cropping practices and pest management, enhanced access to and use of water, and strengthened compliance with international quality standards and certification. A total of 3,569 dunums of land were cultivated according to international standards, with high-value crops worth an estimated \$44 million marketed in total by 21 farmer cooperatives, including more than \$21 million in exports and almost \$90,000 worth of processed food products produced by six women's cooperatives. Post-harvest capacities were also improved with the provision of tools and equipment for forklifts for 33 cooperatives in the West Bank and Gaza.

51. In the West Bank, over 800 farmers benefited from the rehabilitation of infrastructure for water management. UNDP worked with the Ministry of Agriculture to improve the productivity of 12 rural communities in the West Bank by opening 3.6 km of agricultural roads, which enabled access for more than 300 farmers to their land, and to construct water infrastructure which benefited over 1,000 farmers. In Gaza, FAO supported 340 farmers in the access-restricted areas to improve irrigation and productivity. FAO established a livestock market in Al-Thaharriyah in Hebron, providing 2,000 herders with a point of sale and access to the formal market.

#### **Human rights, women, children and youth**

52. The Palestinian Government, with technical assistance from United Nations agencies, submitted its initial State party report under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women ([CEDAW/C/PSE/1](#)) on 8 March 2017 and made significant progress on the six remaining reports of the core international human rights treaties. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights trained 106 representatives of human rights organizations and the Independent Commission for Human Rights, focusing on monitoring and documenting the Government's implementation of the legal commitments under the treaties. The Office also organized trainings for 139 representatives of civil society and community-based organizations on the provisions and standards in the human rights treaties to which Palestine has acceded.

53. UNDP and UN-Women supported 28,000 individuals, 55 per cent of whom were women, to benefit from legal aid by civil society organizations, and more than 6,000 women received awareness-raising on legal rights provided by civil society organizations in the West Bank and Gaza.

54. In 24 Area C communities, UNDP and UN-Women supported 800 women in participating in activities focusing on women's role in public life, following which 26 women were nominated for local government elections and received training on communication skills, community participation and local government-related issues. In Gaza, women also benefited from the Young Women Leaders programme, which provided 950 female university graduates with leadership, life-skills and self-development training.

55. The UNRWA Family and Child Protection programme in the West Bank identified 449 survivors (382 female and 67 male) of gender-based violence, domestic violence and/or other forms of abuse. All identified cases received individual counselling, and 21 critical/emergency cases were referred to specialized non-governmental organizations. In Gaza, 1,535 survivors of gender-based violence

were identified, with 1,518 cases referred to internal UNRWA service providers and an additional 17 cases referred to external partner service providers. Through these efforts, survivors accessed over 1,200 psychosocial counselling and legal service options.

56. United Nations agencies trained over 300 service providers, teachers and social counsellors on the detection of, response to and referral systems for gender-based violence cases in line with Palestinian national referral protocols and standard operating procedures. More than 11,800 survivors of gender-based violence received help from one or more of the psychosocial, health, legal and awareness-raising services in both the West Bank and Gaza. A new safe space for women and girls was set up in the West Bank, and outreach awareness activities were conducted, reaching nearly 5,000 beneficiaries.

57. UNICEF continues to lead the inter-agency working group for the monitoring and reporting of grave violations against children in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory in accordance with Security Council resolutions [1612 \(2005\)](#) and [1882 \(2009\)](#). In 2016, the working group documented and monitored a total of 2,050 incidents of grave violations against children.

58. During the reporting period, 14,590 youth were reached through empowerment programmes supported by UNFPA, including youth-led community initiatives to reduce their vulnerabilities, and through innovative youth initiatives targeting 450 youth and 20 decision makers. UNFPA supported two youth summits held in Jerusalem, and UN-Habitat engaged youth in the design of public space. UNICEF worked with its partners to promote the civic participation of adolescents through the introduction of six innovation labs (five in the West Bank and one in Gaza). As a result of the introduction of these labs a total of 1,528 adolescents (51 per cent of whom were female) in the West Bank and 366 adolescents in Gaza benefited from safe spaces where they can conduct research after school and where they can provide innovative solutions for issues that arise in their community or lives.

### **Environment, housing and urban development**

59. UN-Habitat successfully finished the implementation of 10 spatial planning programmes in Area C of the West Bank, which helped reduce displacement pressure on more than 32,000 Palestinians. UNDP completed infrastructure projects that support communities and institutions located in Area C, benefiting 90,000 people through the improvement of public transportation infrastructure.

60. UN-Habitat continued its support for the National Spatial Plan for the State of Palestine and advocacy efforts to develop and negotiate planning solutions with the Israeli planning authorities.

61. In East Jerusalem, UNDP supported the development of a public space serving more than 40,000 residents, a children's playground accessible for 20,000 residents, and the rehabilitation of 19 residential units. Home rehabilitation was completed for 500 disadvantaged people with a focus on women-headed households. UNDP further rehabilitated more than 15 business centres in the Old City of Jerusalem and launched revitalization interventions to support the commercial districts of Sultan Suleiman and Salah Al-Din streets.

62. In Gaza, UN-Habitat supported the updating and development of two master plans and four detailed outline plans by the municipalities and community representative communities. UNDP rehabilitated 12,600 partially damaged housing units affected by the 2014 hostilities, for 82,290 non-refugees, reconstructed 2 units in Rafah, and constructed 56 new housing units for 392 beneficiaries in the northern

Gaza Strip. UNDP started the rehabilitation and consolidation of the Gaza Industrial Estate, to directly benefit 22,000 labourers and businessmen.

## **B. United Nations system emergency assistance**

63. Most of the United Nations response focused on Gaza, which included some of the residual needs from the 2014 conflict. The 2016 response plan mobilized \$280 million out of \$571 million sought (49 per cent).

64. The 2017 Humanitarian Response Plan seeks \$547 million, of which about 68 per cent of the requirements are for Gaza. The Plan includes \$282 million for the UNRWA Emergency Appeal.

65. Despite the increasing pace of reconstruction, shelter remains the primary need, with approximately 40,000 persons remaining displaced as a result of the damage and destruction of housing stemming from the 2014 conflict. As of February 2017, a funding gap remains for nearly 4,000 totally destroyed homes and 57,000 homes which sustained partial damage.

66. The United Nations Mine Action Service clearance efforts have returned a sense of security for 1,500 Gazans living, farming and rebuilding in 106 of 136 locations suspected of harbouring buried explosive remnants of war.

67. UNDP contributed to addressing the energy crisis in Gaza through the construction of photovoltaic cells and the installation of solar panels in health and water facilities, schools and higher education institutions, and rehabilitated the electricity power distribution networks in three governorates, benefiting over 500,000 people.

### **Emergency agriculture support**

68. Access to livelihood assets and resources was restored for more than 3,000 farmers, herders and rural households, of which almost 2,600 households benefited from the rehabilitation of water reservoirs in Gaza. 160 peri-urban poor households received materials for small-scale, home-based food production units.

### **Emergency food support**

69. In the West Bank, WFP assisted 250,000 vulnerable and food-insecure individuals, 108,000 through cash-based transfers and 142,000 through in-kind food distributions. UNRWA and WFP continued their joint in-kind food assistance programme, supporting 37,000 marginalized Bedouin and herders in 85 Bedouin communities.

70. In Gaza, 960,000 refugees received food assistance, with UNRWA distributing 654,348 food parcels to 163,596 families, a sharp increase over the 80,000 individuals reliant on food assistance in 2000. WFP provided 81,500 food-insecure non-refugees with cash-based transfers and 164,000 non-refugees with in-kind food parcels during 2016.

### **Emergency education support**

71. UNICEF facilitated access to education for 4,667 children and 333 teachers on their way to and from school in high-risk locations, particularly Area C, by providing a protective presence. Additionally, 6,760 children who continue to face learning challenges as a result of the 2014 conflict benefited from remedial education in Gaza.

72. The United Nations Mine Action Service, UNICEF and UNRWA, along with community-based organizations, ensured risk education messaging regarding explosive remnants of war was broadcast across Gaza. UNICEF reached 162,000 children and caregivers through education messages on the risks related to explosive remnants of war and unexploded ordnances. The United Nations Mine Action Service also provided 1,800 direct risk education sessions to 48,000 beneficiaries, including 34,000 children.

#### **Emergency health support**

73. UNICEF reached over 48,738 vulnerable children in Gaza with child protection services and psychosocial and case management support. Individual counselling was provided to 13,941 at-risk children, 49 per cent of whom were female, and structured group counselling was provided to 12,142 children attending UNRWA schools. Through UNRWA health centres, psychosocial and protection interventions were provided to 14,589 clients, primarily in the form of individual and group counselling. In addition, 28,007 public awareness sessions were held in schools, health centres and other facilities.

74. In the West Bank, the UNRWA emergency health programme supported six mobile health clinics operating in more than 66 locations, serving a population of 123,719 individuals and delivering 113,325 patient consultations. UNRWA provided mental health and psychosocial support to 55 Bedouin communities facing multiple protection threats. During the reporting period, six mobile psychosocial teams ensured that more than 9,200 individuals had monthly access to psychosocial and mental health support.

#### **Emergency housing support**

75. In Gaza, the United Nations Mine Action Service provided reconstruction partners with 92 risk assessments, 30 site-specific training sessions on the mitigation of explosive remnants of war, continuous quality assurance and support for disposal of explosive ordnances enabling reconstruction of vital infrastructure and housing.

76. As of December 2016, UNRWA provided cash assistance to over 81,000 families. UNDP provided cash assistance to 1,075 non-refugee families displaced by the 2014 conflict, allowing access to temporary shelter while their homes were being repaired or reconstructed. UNRWA provided cash assistance to 124 Palestine refugee families (more than 750 individuals) following home demolitions by the Israeli authorities. Further, 678 Palestine refugee families, comprising 3,771 individuals, received cash assistance and referrals to meet humanitarian needs following search and arrest operations by Israeli security forces in Palestine refugee camps leading to physical damages of their homes and emotional trauma.

#### **Emergency income generation**

77. In 2016, UNRWA in Gaza generated 4,651 temporary positions under the job creation programme and over 8,900 direct and indirect jobs through UNRWA construction projects. UNRWA also employed 14,179 area staff to run its operations and provided food vouchers and cash-for-work opportunities to over 15,750 refugee households, 8,037 households (43,199 individuals) in 19 Palestine refugee camps and 7,713 households (41,457 individuals) outside camps. This provided a cash injection of approximately \$8,501,435 to food-insecure refugee households. Through the electronic food voucher programme, 46,010 Palestine refugees outside of camps were assisted with a total value of more than \$4.8 million.



### **Emergency water and sanitation support**

78. In the West Bank, UNICEF delivered safe drinking water to nearly 56,000 people in 2016. Another 14,000 people benefited from the installation of water infrastructure and storage facilities.

79. In Gaza, UNDP rehabilitated and reconstructed five water wells, 1,200 meters of water networks and two storage tanks that were destroyed in the 2014 conflict. Those efforts included the supply of electricity power networks to the two main sewage pumping stations of Beit Hanoun to mitigate the flooding of sewage water. UNICEF, in partnership with the Palestinian Water Authority and the Coastal Municipalities Water Utility, ensured that 44,130 people had increased access to improved sanitation through the rehabilitation and construction of wastewater networks in the Gaza southern governorates; 41,000 people gained access to water through repairs of water networks; and an additional 37,000 people gained access to water through the reconstruction of three damaged water wells.

80. UNRWA provided solid waste management in all eight Palestine refugee camps in Gaza. In addition, UNRWA provided fuel for the Coastal Municipalities Water Utility and Gaza municipalities to operate water and wastewater assets, municipal solid waste management services, storm water pumps to alleviate the flooding risk, and water wells affected by power outages.

### **Rubble removal and solid waste management**

81. UNDP completed the removal of rubble and debris resulting from the 2014 hostilities in Gaza, benefiting 163,527 people (79,990 male and 83,537 female), and generating 42,122 working days for 717 workers from the population of the affected areas. The programme also supported the creation of emergency jobs, generating 166,372 working days from the community in clean-up activity for 3,707 workers (3,654 male and 53 female).

## **C. United Nations system support to Palestinian institutions**

82. UNDP and UN-Women provided support to justice and security sector institutions, in order to mainstream a gender perspective in policies and planning processes, resulting in the Palestine Civil Police becoming the first police force in the Arab States to adopt a gender strategy.

83. The first-ever social security law for private sector workers and their family members was signed into law by President Abbas on 29 September 2016. In December 2016, the Board of Directors of the social security institution was appointed, with the Minister of Labour as Chair. The International Labour Organization has carried out an actuarial valuation of the social security schemes administered by the Public Pension Agency of Palestine.

84. UNICEF and UNDP supported the implementation of the new juvenile protection law, with training to juvenile judges. Enforcement offices for the family courts were established across the West Bank, and support was provided to the Palestinian Maintenance Fund. A national committee on legal aid was established, along with a specialized data base to support legal harmonization. A dispute resolution centre in East Jerusalem was established for civil and commercial solutions for disputes among Jerusalemites.

85. UNODC supported the Ministry of Justice through the training of seven forensic doctors, the establishment of three forensic medicine clinics, provision of equipment and supplies, provision of training to forensic nurses, and

the development of standard operating procedures in accordance with international standards.

86. FAO supported the Ministry of Agriculture and national institutions to coordinate active surveillance and monitoring in support of the national animal identification system, resulting in a registration rate of 92 per cent of targeted livestock.

87. UNESCO provided technical expertise to the drafting of the Basic Education Law by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, which was signed by the President on 9 April 2017 following its endorsement by the Cabinet.

88. UN-Habitat supported coordinated advocacy by key Palestinian institutions, including in the drafting and adoption of the National Advocacy Strategy for Planning and Development in Area C of the West Bank.

89. UNDP developed and finalized a unified human resource management and development system that was implemented in seven ministries and finalized the General Personnel Council strategic plan for the period 2017-2022. The Palestinian International Cooperation Agency was established to provide expertise and knowledge in support of other countries, and local economic development units were established in five municipalities.

90. UNDP worked with the International Trade Centre and national trade institutions to expand markets and regional commercial connections and to develop the Palestinian export sector through initiatives including bilateral agreements for access to five international markets. UNDP also trained Palestinian Embassy staff to enable them to function as economic attachés to advocate for expanding trade and business relations around the world.

91. UNDP supported the Palestinian Government in submitting the first national communication report and national adaptation plan to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in November 2016, endorsed by 12 line ministries. The Palestinian, Israeli and Jordanian water authorities developed the first climate change visualization tool in the region, presenting 10 climatic indicators for 2030. UNDP trained 15 water and climate change professionals from the three countries in climate change modelling and visualization tools.

92. UNFPA supported the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics in developing the report *Palestine 2030 — Demographic Change: Opportunities for Development*, which provides a comprehensive analysis of the impact of the projected population on social sectors.

93. United Nations agencies supported the development of an information management system in the Ministry of Health to document survivals of gender-based violence and to ensure harmonized data collection, monitoring and reporting of gender-based violence cases based on the national referral system. The first national drug rehabilitation and treatment centre was also established with the Ministry of Health, with drug rehabilitation and treatment protocols, standard operating procedures and a code of ethics. Assistance was also provided to improve patient records and registries, and to strengthen hospital information systems and update hospital contingency plans.

94. UNICEF supported the Ministry of Social Development in conducting the first comprehensive study on the situation of children with disabilities in the West Bank and Gaza, and subsequently revised the Disability Law to ensure its alignment with international standards, including the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

95. UNICEF assisted the intersectoral national Early Childhood Development Committee to finalize the national strategy and early childhood interventions plan for the period 2017-2022, with an emphasis on early detection for children with developmental delays and disabilities and intervention services, focusing on the most vulnerable and hard to reach children.

96. WFP supported the Civil Defence in building capacity in the area of emergency preparedness and response, focusing on coordination and search and rescue. WFP delivered emergency response tools and is finalizing three governorate emergency operation and coordination centres to expand the ability of the Civil Defence to coordinate and respond to large-scale natural disasters.

#### **D. Private sector development**

97. In Gaza, 4,989 microfinance loans with a value of \$7.4 million were disbursed. In the West Bank, 11,841 loans valued at over \$16 million were disbursed, with Palestine refugees receiving 2,638 loans (valued at \$3,484,604). Women and youth received 40 per cent of the loans extended.

#### **E. Coordination of United Nations assistance**

98. Under the auspices of the Deputy Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process/United Nations Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator, collaboration and coordination between the numerous donor and United Nations forums continued during the reporting period. The humanitarian country team met regularly to agree on humanitarian advocacy and response measures. With the support of the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, the United Nations country team continued to coordinate its United Nations Development Assistance Framework programming, in alignment with the Palestinian National Development Plan priorities. Efforts to forge constructive partnerships between the United Nations, the Government of the State of Palestine and the broader aid community continued. The United Nations country team developed the common country analysis and the second United Nations Development Assistance Framework to cover the period 2018-2022 in alignment with the Palestinian Authority's National Policy Agenda. The United Nations continued preparation of regular Ad Hoc Liaison Committee reports, strategies and guidance for development and humanitarian work. In particular, the United Nations finalized its strategy for East Jerusalem and continued the implementation of the Hebron strategy for development and economic initiatives, and together with other humanitarian actors, the 2017 Humanitarian Response Plan.

### **IV. Donor response to the crisis**

#### **Budgetary and fiscal support**

99. The fiscal position of the Government of the State of Palestine remained fragile despite improvements in fiscal performance. The Government improved its fiscal performance with strong growth in revenue and restrained growth in expenditure during the year, reducing its budget deficit from around 11 per cent of GDP in 2015 to an estimated 8 per cent of GDP in 2016. This was enabled by large transfers on account of lump sum payments on the clearance revenue account. Direct budget support by donors continued to decline, and arrears continued to accumulate.

### **Donor coordination**

100. The Palestinian Government launched the national policy agenda for the period 2017-2022 on 22 February 2017. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework for the period 2018-2022 is being formulated. The coordination of humanitarian assistance and advocacy, led by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, continued.

101. In June 2016, the Area C Coordination Office within the Prime Minister's Office became operational, with the role of addressing both humanitarian and development issues and information-sharing and donor coordination.

102. The local aid coordination structure continued to serve as a key forum for donors and the Palestinian Government.

103. The Ad Hoc Liaison Committee met twice during the reporting period, in Brussels on 19 April 2016 and in New York on 19 September 2016.

## **V. Unmet needs**

104. Given the continued humanitarian needs, the 2017 Humanitarian Response Plan is requesting \$547 million, of which \$282 million is also included in the UNRWA Emergency Appeal. To date, only 9 per cent of the requested amount for the Plan has been raised. Additional support is also urgently needed for the UNRWA core budget, which faces a predicted shortfall of \$115 million for 2017.

105. Of the \$3.5 billion pledged at the Cairo pledging conference for the recovery and reconstruction of Gaza in October 2014 (in the detailed needs assessment and recovery framework, a total need of \$3.9 billion was estimated), some 46 per cent had been disbursed as of July 2016. However, only \$16 million of these pledges has gone towards financing the productive sector needs identified in the detailed needs assessment and recovery framework (less than 3 per cent of the \$602 million needed). Moreover, just over \$100 million is still needed for the reconstruction of nearly 3,000 homes which were totally destroyed in 2014.

106. UNRWA is seeking \$402 million in its 2017 Emergency Appeal to meet the minimum humanitarian needs of Palestine refugees in the occupied Palestinian territory. A total of \$355 million is required for programme interventions in Gaza, including \$89.4 million for emergency food assistance, \$138.4 million for emergency shelter assistance, \$69.9 million for emergency cash-for-work assistance, \$4.5 million for emergency health, and \$5.0 million for education in emergencies.

## **VI. Challenges**

107. During the reporting period, the operating environment remained challenging, owing in large part to restrictions on access and movement. In Gaza, the ability of United Nations organizations and partners to deliver timely assistance was limited at times due to physical barriers such as checkpoints, a restrictive permit policy for humanitarian personnel, and restrictions on the import of materials into Gaza. In the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, restrictions on movement and access, the demolition of Palestinian infrastructure and the associated displacement of Palestinians also impacted United Nations operations.

108. The lack of progress on intra-Palestinian reconciliation continues to impact the ability of the United Nations to reach and provide comprehensive assistance for institution-strengthening and the statehood agenda. Announcements by the

Government of Israel during the reporting period, in particular in relation to settlement expansion in early 2017, contributed to an escalation of tensions.

109. Development and humanitarian funding to the State of Palestine has continued to decline during the reporting period, requiring greater strategic focus of interventions and identifying opportunities for synergies with other implementing entities.

## **VII. Conclusions**

110. The operational context for the work of the United Nations in the reporting period was increasingly difficult due to the challenges outlined above, along with a constrained funding environment. The United Nations will continue to work towards the realization of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East on the basis of Security Council resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#), [338 \(1973\)](#), [1397 \(2002\)](#), [1515 \(2003\)](#), [1850 \(2008\)](#), [1860 \(2009\)](#) and [2334 \(2016\)](#), an end to the occupation that began in 1967, and the establishment of a sovereign, democratic, viable and contiguous Palestinian State, existing side by side in peace with a secure Israel.

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# General Assembly Economic and Social Council

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Strengthening of the coordination of  
humanitarian and disaster relief assistance  
of the United Nations, including special  
economic assistance**

**Economic and Social Council  
2018 session  
27 July 2017–26 July 2018  
Agenda item 14  
Implementation of the Declaration on the  
Granting of Independence to Colonial  
Countries and Peoples by the specialized  
agencies and the international institutions  
associated with the United Nations**

## **Assistance to the Palestinian people\*\***

### **Report of the Secretary-General**

#### *Summary*

The present report, submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolution [72/134](#), contains an assessment of the assistance received by the Palestinian people, the needs still unmet and proposals for responding effectively to them.

In December 2017, the 2018–2020 Humanitarian Response Plan for the occupied Palestinian territory was finalized, offering, for the first time, a three-year planning horizon. The Plan requires \$539.7 million for 2018 to address urgent humanitarian needs throughout the occupied Palestinian territory.

The time frame for the disbursement of the \$3.5 billion pledged in October 2014, at the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, ended in 2017. As at 31 March 2018, the disbursement rate stood at 54 per cent (\$1.884 billion). Through the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism, reconstruction and repair of the 17,800 uninhabitable houses following the 2014 escalation of hostilities have continued, with more than 70 per cent completed. Over 20,000 people remain displaced.

In 2017, the Government of Palestine implemented the first year of the National Policy Agenda 2017–2022. To support that national development vision, the United Nations formulated its second ever United Nations Development Assistance Framework for the country and commenced implementation in January 2018. The financial resources required for the assistance provided through the Framework are approximately \$1.26 billion over five years (2018–2022).

\* [A/73/50](#).

\*\* Reissued for technical reasons on 13 June 2018; previously issued under the symbol A/73/84-E/2018/65.



## I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolution [72/134](#), in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report at its seventy-third session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the resolution, containing an assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people, an assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them. The reporting period is from April 2017 to March 2018.

2. Information on the political and socioeconomic situation is provided in several reports prepared by United Nations entities and submitted to various United Nations bodies, including the monthly Security Council briefings by the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process; the annual report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) ([A/72/13](#)); and the reports of the Office of the Special Coordinator to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians of September 2017 and March 2018.

3. The humanitarian, economic and development needs of the Palestinian people are reflected in several complementary strategic and resource mobilization documents. Under the 2018–2020 Humanitarian Response Plan, \$539.7 million is sought for 2018 to provide access to basic services and support the ability of Palestinians to cope with and overcome the protracted crisis. Through the Plan, the United Nations and its partners will continue to coordinate and deliver humanitarian and protection assistance to 1.9 million vulnerable Palestinians.

4. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2018–2022 presents the United Nations strategic response to Palestinian development priorities contained in the National Policy Agenda for 2017–2022. The Framework places the Palestinian people at the centre of development programming in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and requires financial resources of approximately \$1.26 billion over five years (2018–2022).

5. Throughout the year, the Office of the Special Coordinator continued its efforts to support the peace process and to promote coordination among the Government of Palestine, the United Nations, the international community and the Government of Israel.

## II. Overview of the current situation

### A. Political context

6. The reporting period was characterized by an increase in violence compared with the period from April 2016 to March 2017. Settlement activities continued but showed a decline in most indicators, and demolitions of Palestinian-owned structures also continued, albeit at a significantly lower rate. Divisions among the Palestinian factions persisted, despite Egyptian-led efforts to advance reconciliation, and have negative implications on the socioeconomic, humanitarian and social aspects of life in the occupied Palestinian territory, most acutely in Gaza.

7. While the international community continued to seek ways to advance peace, no tangible progress was realized. On 27 August 2017, the Secretary-General undertook his first official visit to Israel and Palestine, where he reaffirmed that there was no alternative to the two-State solution, based on relevant United Nations resolutions, international law and prior agreements.

8. On 6 December 2017, the President of the United States of America announced the decision to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and to move the United States Embassy to Jerusalem, stating that final status issues, including the specific boundaries of Israeli sovereignty in Jerusalem, remained for the parties to determine. Since then, there has been a marked increase in violence and tensions on the ground with increased numbers of clashes, deaths and injuries. Speaking at the Security Council on 20 February 2018, the President of Palestine, Mahmoud Abbas, called for an international peace conference to be held by mid-2018, which would form a multilateral mechanism that would assist the two parties to the negotiations in resolving all permanent status issues, attaining full United Nations membership for the State of Palestine and mutual recognition between the State of Palestine and the State of Israel on the basis of the 1967 borders.

9. From April to early December 2017, four rockets were fired from Gaza towards Israel. Militants fired some 61 rockets between 6 December 2017 and 25 March 2018. Beginning in February 2018, there were at least six incidents of improvised explosive devices being placed by Palestinian militants, which exploded at the Gaza fence, in one case wounding four Israeli soldiers. On each occasion, Israeli forces responded with air strikes and shelling against Hamas targets. An improvised explosive device targeting the convoy of the Prime Minister of Palestine, Rami Hamdallah, in Gaza in March 2018 lightly injured six people. The Israeli military announced that it had destroyed five tunnels leading from Gaza to Israeli and/or Egyptian territory since October 2017. In one such operation on 30 October, 12 members of Islamic Jihad were killed inside the tunnel.

10. The planning, tendering and building of new settlement housing units continued, with most indicators pointing to a decline compared with the previous reporting period. The Israeli Civil Administration advanced plans for some 4,500 housing units in Area C settlements, down from over 7,000 during the previous period. An additional 1,400 units reached the final stage of approval before construction. Tenders for nearly 1,200 units were announced throughout Area C, a decline compared with some 3,500 units in the previous period. In occupied East Jerusalem, plans for some 2,300 housing units were advanced, a sharp increase over the approximately 1,500 units advanced in the previous reporting period, although no new tenders were issued.

11. On 12 October 2017, under Egyptian mediation, Fatah and Hamas reached agreement on a process to end the political division between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

12. Despite statements by senior Fatah and Hamas officials reiterating their commitment to reconciliation efforts, the two sides have failed to demonstrate the necessary commitment to taking concrete measures to advance the process. These continuing divisions served to exacerbate the humanitarian and service delivery crisis on the ground.

## **B. Humanitarian and socioeconomic context**

### **Economic and fiscal developments**

13. The economic conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory were characterized by stagnant growth in both the West Bank and Gaza and high unemployment in the range of 13.7 per cent in the West Bank and 42.7 per cent in Gaza at the end of 2017.

14. In Gaza, gross domestic product (GDP) per capita declined in all four quarters in 2017, while the unemployment rate increased steadily in the first three quarters of



the year before declining slightly in the fourth quarter, owing in part to seasonal agricultural work. The majority of the unemployed are younger than 30 years of age.

### **Humanitarian developments**

15. The reporting period witnessed a significant increase in violence and casualties compared with the previous period. A total of 101 Palestinians were killed in direct conflict incidents (up from 60 the previous year), mostly by Israeli security forces. Sixteen Israelis, including seven members of Israeli security forces, were killed by Palestinians during the same period (up from 12 the previous period). Half of the Palestinian fatalities and over 70 per cent of the injuries occurred during three waves of clashes between Palestinians and Israeli forces: in July 2017, following a fatal shooting attack at one of the entrances at the Haram al-Sharif/Temple Mount; in December 2017, after United States recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel; and in March 2018, at the “Great March of Return” in Gaza.

16. In 2017, 15 Palestinian children (13 boys and 2 girls) were killed in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and in the Gaza Strip, all attributed to the Israeli security forces. Five children (2 girls and 3 boys) between 15 and 17 years of age were killed by Israeli security forces in the context of stabbing or reported stabbing attacks in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. One 9-year-old boy died of injuries incurred in Gaza in 2014, one 16-year-old was killed by the detonation of previously unexploded ordnance in a military training zone in the Jordan Valley, and seven children were killed by live ammunition used by Israeli security forces in clashes in Gaza and the West Bank.

17. In 2017, Palestinian children continued to be arrested and detained by Israeli security forces for alleged security offences, particularly stone and Molotov cocktail throwing during clashes. According to data from the Israel Prison Service, on average 312 Palestinian children were held in detention each month between January and December 2017. At the end of December 2017, of the 352 children detained, 244 were held in pretrial detention and/or during trial. The United Nations also documented five cases of children held in administrative detention in 2017.

18. The internal divide between the Palestinian Authority in Ramallah and the Hamas de facto authorities in Gaza worsened in early 2017. In reaction to the formation by Hamas of a parallel institution to run governmental affairs, the Palestinian Authority reduced salary allowances of its employees in Gaza by 30–50 per cent in April 2017. The measure affected nearly 60,000 public sector employees. The Palestinian Authority also implemented an early retirement scheme, affecting a minimum of 4,000 security and 6,000 civilian personnel, and ceased the payment of stipends to at least 277 former political prisoners. Cuts in salaries and allowances greatly diminished purchasing power and the already limited economic activity. The internal divide also contributed to an energy crisis. In June 2017, the Palestinian Authority reduced payments for the 120-MW line that provides Gaza with electricity from Israel, bringing supplies down to 70 MW. Although the Palestinian Authority resumed payment for the 50 MW in January 2018, the improvement in electricity provision was short-lived, as the Authority ordered the Gaza Electricity Distribution Company to start covering part of the cost of the electricity purchased from Israel, at the expense of the fuel purchased to run the Gaza power plant. Consequently, electricity outages of up to 20 hours a day continue to undermine the provision of basic services.

19. During the reporting period, the Israeli authorities demolished or seized 314 Palestinian-owned structures throughout the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, displacing 448 Palestinians, half of them children, and affecting the livelihoods of more than 3,200 people, a sharp decline from the 764 structures, 1,222 displaced, and

over 8,000 affected during the previous reporting period. Of the demolished structures, 41 were provided by donors as humanitarian assistance. Most of the structures were destroyed or seized for lack of Israeli-issued building permits, which are nearly impossible to obtain in vast parts of Area C, including East Jerusalem. Palestinians can legally build on less than 1 per cent of Area C only, and the approval of new plans is far from meeting the needs of the Palestinian population.

### **Movement, humanitarian access and operational space**

20. During the reporting period, access and movement restrictions on Palestinians imposed by the Government of Israel remained in place, including on land and sea access to Gaza, and across the Barrier, which restricts access by Palestinians to some 5 per cent of the West Bank, including most of East Jerusalem. Such measures, which Israel imposed, citing security concerns, impede Palestinian access to land, social services and economic opportunities and severely constrain efforts to improve their conditions.

21. Only a small minority of Palestinians in Gaza remain eligible for exit permits through the Israeli-controlled Erez crossing, primarily patients, businesspeople and the staff of international organizations. The exit of Palestinians through Erez into Israel declined by almost 50 per cent in 2017, or 82,810 exits compared with 158,250 in 2016. The year 2017 witnessed the lowest approval rate (54 per cent) for permit applications for patients to exit Gaza through Erez since the World Health Organization (WHO) began monitoring them in 2008. By the end of 2017, there was an 85 per cent decline in the number of businesspeople with valid trader permits for Israel, compared with late 2015. The Rafah crossing to Egypt was open for only 36 days in 2017, compared with 44 days in 2016 and 32 days in 2015. Some 1,405 patients from Gaza crossed through Rafah in 2017; before the closure in July 2013, more than 4,000 Gaza residents had crossed Rafah to Egypt each month for health-related reasons. In April 2017, Israeli authorities announced the interception of an attempt to smuggle explosives into Israel by a Palestinian medical patient from Gaza, accusing Hamas of exploiting the movement of civilians for militant activities.

22. During the reporting period, the volume of goods entering Gaza from Israel through the Kerem Shalom crossing decreased by 5 per cent compared with the previous reporting period (113,405 and 119,480 truckloads, respectively). The decline is attributable mostly to the worsening economic situation, a slowdown in reconstruction activities due to funding shortages, and the increase in the entrance of goods through Egypt. Israeli authorities reportedly foiled several attempts to smuggle contraband into Gaza concealed as civilian goods. Since the beginning of 2018, the Israeli authorities have approved thousands of pending residential cases, more than 130 private sector projects and over 1,200 requests for the import of items that Israel considers to be of dual civilian and military use.

23. Palestinian movement is still restricted in East Jerusalem, with West Bank identification card holders, except men over 55 and women over 50, needing permits to enter the city, and in the Israeli-controlled area of Hebron (H2 zone), where more than 100 obstacles, including 18 permanent checkpoints, separate part of the H2 zone from the rest of the city. Nearly 30 per cent of Area C is designated as “firing zones” for Israeli military training, where residence or access is prohibited.

### **Barrier**

24. The United Nations Register of Damage Caused by the Construction of the Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, established pursuant to General Assembly resolution ES-10/17, continued its outreach and claim intake activities to “serve as a record, in documentary form, of the damage caused to all natural and legal persons

concerned as a result of the construction of the wall by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem” (para. 3 (a)). More than 66,500 claims and over 750,000 supporting documents have been collected. Claim intake activities are completed in eight out of nine affected Palestinian governorates, with work in Jerusalem at an advanced stage.

### **III. United Nations response**

#### **A. Human and social development**

25. During the reporting period, the United Nations continued to coordinate and deliver humanitarian and development assistance in the occupied Palestinian territory. That assistance targeted Palestinian individuals and communities in geographic areas beyond the reach of the Palestinian Authority, including East Jerusalem, Area C in the West Bank and Gaza. The United Nations collectively sought to invest its efforts in the most vulnerable subsections of the population most at risk of being left behind.

##### **Education**

26. During the 2017/18 academic year, UNRWA provided free primary education (grades 1–9) to 271,900 students (140,347 boys and 131,553 girls) in 275 elementary and preparatory schools in Gaza and a further 48,192 students (28,537 girls and 19,655 boys) in 95 elementary and preparatory schools in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

27. In Gaza, UNRWA constructed and reconstructed seven new schools. Four of them became operational during the 2017/18 academic year, accommodating about 6,000 students.

28. During the reporting period, UNRWA schools in the West Bank continued to participate in the inclusive education programme. In 2017, inclusive education activities at the school level in the West Bank included training for 475 staff, including school principals and teachers, in inclusive education practices, and for 170 school counsellors and teachers, focusing on recreational activities in support of student psychosocial well-being. The training was extended to the West Bank. In Gaza, 11 schools benefited from an inclusive education.

29. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) awarded 970 scholarships (513 to women) through the Al Fakhoora Dynamic Futures programme in Gaza. A total of 785 students were also engaged in different leadership activities. Economic empowerment projects targeting 224 students were also implemented.

30. UNDP completed the construction and rehabilitation of 46 schools and higher education institutions in Gaza, serving 119,000 students. UNDP also inaugurated the first child-friendly school in Gaza, designed in cooperation with the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF).

31. In East Jerusalem, UNDP enhanced the learning environment of 71 private schools and provided 44 additional classrooms through the construction of 2 new schools. UNDP also provided access to quality education for 28 private schools. In the West Bank, UNDP built 19 classrooms in schools and rehabilitated 94 educational units in 12 schools and 6 kindergartens in Area C and East Jerusalem. As a result, around 6,147 students (61 per cent of them girls) currently have access to a physically improved educational environment.

32. Across the occupied Palestinian territory, UNICEF provided capacity development for 100 preschool and first grade teachers and 50 principals on

appropriate early childhood development practices; trained 980 teachers on innovative teaching approaches to life skills and active learning; and strengthened the capacity of 620 teachers and 240 counsellors on detecting and addressing signs of violence and promoting alternatives to violence among students. In addition, with UNICEF support, 10,000 students in Gaza and the West Bank participated in student-led initiatives promoting non-violence and peaceful conflict resolution.

## **Health**

33. During the reporting period, UNRWA operated 43 health-care facilities, comprising 24 primary health-care centres and 19 health points, as well as six mobile clinics, one hospital and one non-communicable disease referral centre, in the West Bank. These facilities collectively employed 823 staff. In Gaza, primary health-care services were provided through 22 health-care facilities that employed 954 UNRWA personnel.

34. In Gaza, UNDP completed the rehabilitation and renovation works of Al-Quds Hospital and the reconstruction and equipping of Atta Habib Medical Centre, benefiting over 650,000 people. In addition, UNDP concluded the installation of solar panels to provide energy to three hospitals and supplied needed medicine.

35. UNDP completed the upgrading of the chemotherapy department at the Augusta Victoria Hospital in East Jerusalem, providing improved access to health care for 1,500 cancer patients annually. UNDP also improved the quality of health-care services for 30,000 patients in the West Bank (Yatta, Jenin, Alia and Al-Najah).

36. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) reached more than 250,000 women with education on breast cancer and provided more than 3,000 mammogram screening tests to women in isolated areas of the West Bank and Gaza. The first comprehensive report on breast cancer and related services was published. The agency also supported the updating of protocols and work aids for sexual and reproductive health and introduced a human rights perspective into family planning services. Full-scale training on the updated protocols was completed in the West Bank and Gaza, with training delivered for 59 senior staff and Ministry of Health department heads. UNFPA also supported the updating of obstetric-care protocols, with training for midwives completed in 13 Ministry of Health hospitals in the West Bank.

37. UNICEF supported the introduction of innovative early childhood development and intervention services in 47 health centres, kindergartens and nurseries, and over 5,400 families with young children benefited from parent education, and 2,187 children ages 0 to 3 benefited from early detection and intervention services.

38. In Gaza, UNICEF supported the expansion of the Rafah and Khan Yunis Hospitals with new additional floors for neonate intensive care units since October 2017, benefiting 5,000 neonates, out of the annual expected caseload of 8,500 neonates. A third neonate unit in Bayt Jala Hospital, in the West Bank, has been expanded to double its capacity, to serve a total of 1,000 neonates on a yearly basis starting in June 2018.

39. UNICEF initiated the telemedicine approach by videoconference between Al-Makassed Hospital, in Jerusalem, with Al-Nasser Paediatric Hospital, in Gaza, which each month is helping 600 families with young children from Gaza to access quality health-care services when they are denied referral health-care services.

40. UNICEF supported the procurement of vaccines and related supplies and disposables to ensure the year-long provision of immunization services and coverage.

41. Ten clinics in Gaza benefited from exclusive breastfeeding promotion, reaching 145,453 lactating mothers. In 2017, over 40,000 lactating mothers benefited from counselling sessions in primary health-care facilities in the West Bank.

42. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) supported the establishment of a national rehabilitation centre in Bethlehem and the preparation of protocols and policies for drug treatment. UNODC and WHO laid down the foundations to redirect drug treatment, rehabilitation and prevention services by providing updated data on illicit drug use and high-risk drug users.

43. WHO supported the implementation of the Patient Safety Friendly Hospital Initiative and supported the development of tools for improving the extraction and analysis of hospital-based data to improve the quality of health care. WHO continued to support the implementation of the Package of Essential Non-communicable Disease Interventions for Primary Health Care, as well as the family practice approach in primary care.

44. WHO worked with the Ministry of Health to strengthen core capacities for the International Health Regulations, focused on improving coordination, surveillance, laboratories, infection prevention and control and emergency preparedness and response. WHO provided technical support to partners with training on the right to health and implementation of a human rights-based approach to health.

#### **Water and sanitation**

45. UNDP supported enhanced access to safe water and sanitation for 200,000 people through the rehabilitation of damaged sewage and water networks across the Gaza Strip. In the West Bank, access to safe and reliable drinking water was enhanced through the installation of 1,473 waterlines and 335 house connections. UNDP also improved access to water and sanitation services at the Jericho Agro-Industrial Park.

46. In 2017, UNICEF supported 65,277 people (32,775 in the West Bank and 32,502 in the Gaza Strip) through water network repairs, the installation of domestic water storage tanks and water tankering. Some 75,000 people in the Gaza Strip benefited from increased access to safe drinking water after the completion of the first phase of the southern Gaza desalination plant.

47. UNICEF supported a total of 166,766 people in gaining access to improved sanitation, and an additional 16,330 people benefited from the construction and rehabilitation of wastewater networks and sanitation household connections and services. The upgrading of the Jomizit El Sabeel sewage pumping station was completed in April 2017, benefiting 150,000 people.

48. Through the World Food Programme (WFP) e-voucher system, UNICEF provided hygiene kits to 17,146 households, benefiting around 205,750 people. UNICEF also distributed hygiene kits and cleaning kits to 102 schools in the West Bank, benefiting 35,700 students.

49. Approximately 160,000 students in 1,660 schools in the West Bank and 16,000 community members participated in the Global Handwashing Day campaign. UNICEF supported the rehabilitation and construction works for water, sanitation and hygiene facilities in schools, benefiting 60 schools attended by over 41,600 children.

#### **Employment**

50. During the reporting period, UNRWA continued to be the second largest employer in Gaza, with 13,000 employees accounting for some 8.5 per cent of the workforce. In addition, UNRWA construction projects and job creation programmes generated 10,000 jobs.

51. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) supported the business development of 26 women's cooperatives (950 members) and 4 companies led by women, through the provision of training in high-quality food processing, trademark, individual property rights and product labelling to increase access to national and international markets.

52. In 2017, the International Labour Organization (ILO) conducted five business training workshops for facilitators (3 in the West Bank and 2 in Gaza) targeting a total of 171 Palestinian teachers. ILO also trained eight training service providers and 18 trainers (9 men and 9 women) on starting businesses.

53. UNDP provided sustainable employment opportunities to 1,314 people and temporary employment opportunities and on-the-job training to more than 900 youth graduates. Capacity development programmes, including business planning, basic management training skills and specialized technical training, supported more than 400 beneficiaries. UNDP provided economic empowerment activities for 657 poor families, including start-up grants to 227 households (of which 29 per cent were headed by women). A total of 430 very small and microenterprises received financing (of which 27 per cent were owned and managed by women). UNDP also provided job placement opportunities for 129 university graduates (106 female) from East Jerusalem.

54. UNDP interventions generated over 410,000 opportunities across the West Bank and Gaza Strip through labour-intensive infrastructure.

55. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) supported the establishment of "reconciliation units" in six governorates in the West Bank, which provide legal support to women in conflict with their employers and reached over 1,000 women workers with an awareness-raising campaign during which women workers' rights under the Palestinian Labour Law were explained.

56. UN-Women provided support to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics in generating knowledge products related to gender gaps in certain sectors in the form of pamphlets and posters. UN-Women also promoted positive coping mechanisms for marginalized women through skills enhancement and partnerships to access income-generation opportunities.

### **Targeted social protection**

57. During the reporting period, UNRWA distributed 395,123 food parcels to almost 21,000 Palestine refugee households in Gaza and supported 36,000 more beneficiaries through cash-based transfers in the West Bank.

58. WFP also provided emergency food assistance and enabled the provision of water, sanitation and hygiene items, in addition to school uniforms. WFP continued to support the Government's social safety net programme, under which 213,000 people in Gaza and the West Bank received food and cash-based transfers.

### **Culture**

59. UNDP completed the revitalization of the Khan al-Wakalah historical site, creating 26 permanent jobs. A total of 18,146 Palestinian youth living in East Jerusalem participated in social and cultural interventions conducted in partnership with non-governmental organizations.

### **Food security and agriculture**

60. FAO supported 1,870 farmers in cultivating over 5,800 dunums of high-value crops with improved, sustainable techniques and pest management. A livestock market was opened in Zahiriyah, Hebron, benefiting over 2,000 herders and enhancing both food security and food safety.

61. FAO installed 61 km of pipes to irrigate almost 10,000 dunums of land cultivated by 775 farming households, reducing water losses by an average of 36 per cent in Area C. In addition, almost 49,000 m<sup>3</sup> of water were made available through the construction and rehabilitation of 175 community cisterns serving 501 households.

62. FAO supported 670 farmers in cultivating guava while controlling the Mediterranean fruit fly, which led to an increase in production and quality and a reduction of pesticide use by 40 per cent.

63. In Area C, 190 dunums of agricultural land were reclaimed through UNDP, benefiting 400 Palestinians and increasing their income. A total of 21.3 km of water networks were installed and rehabilitated, benefiting 4,712 Palestinians.

### **Human rights, women, children and youth**

64. During the reporting period, UNFPA established four safe spaces in the West Bank and Gaza, and nine hospitals and primary health-care clinics were upgraded to handle gender-based violence cases. Some 500 women identified as requiring specialized assistance were treated and referred to medical, social and/or legal services.

65. UNFPA conducted 560 outreach sessions to provide psychosocial support and awareness-raising to community and religious leaders on gender-based violence. Some 1,800 women benefited from dignity kits distribution, including survivors of gender-based violence in the West Bank and Gaza.

66. For the first time, UNFPA supported the production of a reality television show on gender roles, showing men doing domestic work. Some 3,000 people participated in activities marking the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence campaign.

67. In 2017 in the West Bank, UNRWA supported 372 survivors (338 females and 34 males) of gender-based violence, domestic violence and/or other forms of abuse with individual counselling, while 19 critical/emergency cases were referred to non-governmental organizations for specialized assistance. In addition, 564 neglected elderly were given comprehensive assistance.

68. A total of 21,363 beneficiaries participated in a range of psychosocial awareness-raising activities in the West Bank that focused on gender-based violence, mental health, nutrition, sexual and reproductive health, human rights and confronting sexual abuse.

69. In 2017 in Gaza, UNRWA extended support to 1,398 survivors of gender-based violence, with approximately 48 per cent of all cases seen by counsellors at UNRWA health centres. Awareness-raising sessions delivered by legal counsellors reached 4,033 beneficiaries (96 per cent women).

70. UN-Women supported the provision of quality gender-based violence services to women victims and survivors of violence in Gaza, including case management support to 102 people and awareness-raising on gender-based violence incidence and services (for 598 women and 82 men), as well as the establishment of a business incubator.

71. A one-stop centre has been established in Ramallah, which assisted 2,224 people, including 958 cases of children in conflict with the law and child victims of violence, and 1,266 cases of family violence.
72. The safe shelter supported by UN-Women in Nablus hosted a total of 128 women, in addition to 9 girls and 11 boys. In Gaza, UN-Women supported the Hayat Centre with financial aid for the provision of case management support to 199 victims/survivors of gender-based violence.
73. UN-Women supported the Government of Palestine in its reporting requirements for the first ever State report on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and supported non-governmental organizations in drafting a shadow report.
74. UNICEF supported the training of 100 professionals on the application of the new Juvenile Protection Law, including judges and prosecutors, police, lawyers and child protection counsellors.
75. UNICEF also supported the child protection counsellors in the Ministry of Social Development through the provision of 121 coaching sessions on case management. In Gaza, information management systems were strengthened by training 98 child protection professionals on a web-based case management system.
76. UNRWA referred 41 cases of detained children in the West Bank to legal support and other services. Between January and September 2017, 11,223 children (5,615 girls) were supported by UNICEF structured psychosocial services and child protection interventions through 20 centres. A total of 2,882 caregivers increased their awareness of the protection of their children and positive discipline. A total of 75 counsellor rooms, 7 specialized counselling units and 25 play therapy rooms were refurbished, equipped and opened.
77. UNRWA provided mental health and psychosocial support to 57 Bedouin and herder communities in the West Bank that face settler violence, as well as the risk of forced displacement. During the reporting period, over 10,300 individuals received monthly access to psychosocial and mental health support.
78. UNDP increased youth and child participation in sport across the West Bank and Gaza through the establishment of the Palestinian Youth Sports League. Over 6,200 young people (25 per cent female) benefited from the initiative. In addition, six sports facilities and stadiums were built and rehabilitated.
79. UNICEF supported 17,447 adolescents with life skills training to improve their work readiness and civic engagement to be positive agents in their communities, with 10,802 of the youth leading community-based initiatives. A total of 4,533 adolescents were engaged in behavioural change campaigns to reduce violence in schools and communities, build trust between community members and adolescents, and improve social cohesion within and between communities.
80. UNFPA reached 10,376 young people with empowerment programmes and 6,000 young people through peer-to-peer training in universities. More than 1,000 young people participated in youth-led community initiatives. Some 450 young people and 20 decision makers were engaged through innovative new interventions such as a blog bus, an electronic mural, an online demonstration, smartphone films and a youth council.
81. UNRWA supported 383 female university graduates with leadership, life skills and self-development training. Subsequently, 200 female university graduates participated in a five-month work placement programme in different organizations and companies across the Gaza Strip.



### **Environment, housing and urban development**

82. In Gaza, UNDP provided cash assistance for 294 families, with a focus on internally displaced people and women-headed households, and reconstructed 1,014 homes, benefiting 6,386 people.

83. UNDP improved access to housing for 600 disadvantaged people in East Jerusalem, with a focus on women-headed households. UNDP supported 176 Palestinians in starting new housing cooperatives in East Jerusalem. Some 30 awareness-raising workshops on legal, engineering, housing and social issues were conducted with the participation of around 2,750 Jerusalemites.

84. The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) supported human rights mainstreaming in community-driven outline plans (spatial planning) in Area C. The Ministry of Local Government adopted a human rights impact assessment mechanism to inform 5 new local outline plans; 25 consolidated local detailed outline plans; 2 cluster plans for a group of communities; and 3 new city-region plans.

85. UN-Habitat accomplished spatial planning projects in three marginalized municipalities in the Gaza Strip (Wadi al-Salqa, Abasan al-Kabirah and Bayt Lahya) aimed at strengthening local and national institutions for the provision of public services.

86. UN-Habitat and UN-Women inaugurated the first safe and inclusive public space in Gaza using digital technology to engage women and youth in designing their own public spaces. A public space in Wadi al-Jawz in East Jerusalem was also developed by engaging more than 30 young people in the design process and will serve more than 40,000 residents.

## **B. United Nations system emergency assistance**

87. In 2017, the United Nations and its partners again focused most of the humanitarian assistance on Gaza. The United Nations continued to coordinate and deliver humanitarian assistance in the areas of protection, shelter, food security, water and sanitation, health and nutrition and education, reaching approximately 57 per cent, or 0.9 million, out of the total 1.6 million vulnerable Palestinians targeted for assistance in 2017. The 2017 Humanitarian Response Plan mobilized \$258.8 million out of the \$551.9 million sought (47 per cent).

88. In response to the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Gaza, the Gaza urgent funding appeal was made in July 2017, with an eye towards meeting the most urgent requirements under existing 2017 Humanitarian Response Plan projects for humanitarian assistance. Under the 2018–2020 Humanitarian Response Plan, \$539.7 million is sought for 2018, of which about 75 per cent of requirements are for Gaza.

89. Despite the increasing pace of reconstruction in Gaza, over 4,100 families (approximately 22,000 persons) remain displaced as a result of the 2014 conflict. Of those, 3,996 families are still in need of transitional shelter cash assistance. As at 28 February 2018, there was still a funding gap for over 3,100 destroyed housing units and over 55,800 damaged units.

90. The Mine Action Service cleared 71 large aerial bomb sites and supported the safe removal of 2,193 items of explosive remnants of war. The Service also provided risk assessment mitigation to 34 reconstruction sites on 221,280 m<sup>2</sup> of land intended for desalination plants, emergency shelters, public places, roads and buildings.

### **Emergency agriculture support**

91. In response to the threat of displacement, FAO provided emergency in-kind support to 1,300 herder households in Area C, benefiting 8,000 people. Animal feed was distributed for 31,000 animals. FAO also assisted more than 1,300 farming and herding households through the rehabilitation of water cisterns and drip irrigation systems.

92. In Gaza, FAO restored access to water for 53 farming households through the connection of a water well to the electricity grid and the installation of drip irrigation systems. Some 70 food-insecure urban and peri-urban households in the Gaza Strip benefited from the establishment of home gardens with plant and animal production units.

93. FAO strengthened the resilience of herders' livelihoods in the West Bank and Gaza through the preparation of almost 2,200 animal shelters for winter.

### **Emergency food support**

94. Over 990,000 people in Gaza received food assistance through cash-based transfers in 2017. UNRWA distributed in-kind food parcels to 172,613 families (894,232 individuals).

95. In Gaza, WFP provided 81,500 food-insecure non-refugee Palestinians with cash-based transfers and 164,000 non-refugee Palestinians with in-kind food parcels during 2017.

96. In the West Bank, WFP and UNRWA emergency interventions provided in-kind food assistance to more than 37,000 members of Bedouin herder communities in 85 communities living in Area C.

97. In the West Bank, WFP provided food assistance to 104,584 food-insecure non-refugee Palestinians through cash-based transfers and 104,210 non-refugee Palestinians with in-kind food parcels during 2017.

### **Emergency education support**

98. UNICEF reached 5,919 adolescents with life skills and stress relief activities and supported the protective accompaniment of 8,537 children and teachers to and from schools in Area C of the West Bank.

99. In Gaza, UNICEF supported 13,000 children through the provision of supplies and materials for schools, in addition to 3,296 children who benefited from remedial education.

100. The Mine Action Service provided explosive remnants of war risk education to over 41,000 at-risk persons in Gaza, including 27,315 children, and implemented a new risk education methodology aimed to empower at-risk populations and to build resilience. In 2017, there were 24 victims of explosive remnants of war, including 10 children. The Service also provided explosive ordnance disposal clearance support to all United Nations school facilities in Gaza.

### **Emergency health support**

101. UNFPA provided 1,007 women with mammogram testing by mobile clinics, 360 women were provided with cash assistance (for referral treatment and transportation), 1,400 women were provided with support for medical screenings, and 800 women were provided with medicines, vitamins and supplements. Essential equipment was provided to the Ministry of Health and non-governmental organizations to improve breast cancer screening, diagnostic and confirmation capacity.

102. Through UNICEF support, as at 31 December 2017, 60 per cent of mothers and newborns of high-risk pregnancies received postnatal care within two days of birth through home visiting services by skilled midwives or nurses. Since 1 January 2017, 5,411 women and their newborns have benefited from home-based interventions on mother and child care, infant and young child feeding practices counselling, as well as on curative care.

103. UNICEF strengthened the emergency preparedness and response capacity in the West Bank and Gaza by training 154 front-line health practitioners.

104. UNICEF provided essential drugs and medical consumables to the Ministry of Health in Gaza to treat over 437,000 patients (145,716 pregnant and lactating mothers and 291,333 children under 5). Nearly 14 tons of essential drugs were delivered to the West Bank, benefiting a total of 7,600 women and children.

105. In 2017 in Gaza, UNRWA provided individual counselling to 11,088 at-risk children (49 per cent girls) and structured group counselling to 10,020 children attending UNRWA schools. UNRWA health centres provided psychosocial and protection interventions to 4,046 clients (503 men and 3,543 women), primarily in the form of individual and group counselling. A total of 92,750 Palestine refugees attended public awareness sessions convened in schools, health centres and other facilities.

106. In 2017 in the West Bank, UNRWA supported six mobile health clinics operating in 58 communities, serving a population of 117,227. A total of 2,456 Palestine refugees in the West Bank received individual and group psychosocial counselling services.

107. In February 2018, WHO delivered more than 5 tons of essential life-saving medical equipment and over 20 essential medicines and surgical supplies to Gaza hospitals to meet the needs of over 300,000 patients. WHO also provided fuel for generators for a period of six weeks to prevent the closure of 14 public hospitals and 14 non-governmental hospitals in Gaza.

108. WHO provided technical support to the Directorate of Emergency and Ambulance Services in the Ministry of Health for the development of contingency plans for 14 governmental hospitals and 13 primary health directorates in the West Bank.

109. WHO supported the Ministry of Health in improving quality of access to specialized mental health care, including the availability of essential pharmaceuticals for mental health. WHO trained 504 health practitioners working for the Ministry of Health and UNRWA and supported 11 of the 23 UNRWA primary health-care clinics in Gaza.

### **Emergency housing support**

110. Under the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism, the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) supported the import of much-needed reconstruction materials to enter the Gaza Strip. In 2017, 686,631 tons of cement were imported into Gaza. Project materials went to building or preparing for the rebuilding of homes for 23,553 Gazan families. The project used local suppliers, helping to boost the local economy.

111. UNOPS reconstructed 140 completely destroyed houses in 2017 and provided legal, financial and technical support to the families affected.

112. As at 28 February 2018, UNRWA had provided assistance to allow over 84,800 families to complete the repair of their homes in Gaza, while more than 3,000 families had completed or were in the process of rebuilding their completely destroyed homes.

113. In 2017 in the West Bank, UNRWA provided cash assistance to 58 Palestine refugee families following home demolitions by the Israeli authorities. A total of 654 Palestine refugee families received cash assistance and referrals to meet their humanitarian needs, following search-and-arrest operations by the Israeli security forces in Palestine refugee camps that led to damaged homes and trauma.

#### **Emergency income generation**

114. In 2017, UNRWA supported 19,695 people with short-term employment in Gaza. A total of 4,689 full-time equivalent positions were created that collectively injected \$15.78 million into the local Gaza economy. In addition, over 5,000 direct and indirect jobs were created through UNRWA construction projects. UNRWA also employed 14,289 area personnel.

115. UNRWA provided critically required assistance through the provision of cash-for-work opportunities to 8,327 households (indirectly benefiting 44,630 individuals) in 19 Palestine refugee camps across the West Bank.

#### **Emergency water and sanitation support**

116. In Gaza, UNICEF upgraded six schools to serve as designated emergency shelters, including with the installation of toilets, showers, solar energy systems for lighting and roof tanks.

117. In response to the electricity crisis in Gaza, UNICEF repaired 141 damaged water, sanitation and hygiene facilities and 197 associated generators. UNICEF also provided water chlorination disinfection for 70 water, sanitation and hygiene facilities. UNICEF distributed hygiene kits through e-vouchers to more than 23,100 people at information sessions.

118. In 2017 in Gaza, UNRWA provided solid waste management services in all eight Palestine refugee camps, where 560,000 Palestine refugees reside. Similar services were provided by UNRWA in the West Bank in all 19 refugee camps, where 250,000 Palestine refugees reside. UNRWA also provided approximately 3 million litres of fuel to Gaza municipalities to operate water and wastewater assets; approximately 2 million litres of fuel for municipal solid waste management services; fuel and biological control agents to suppress the mosquito population at waste treatment plant sites; and fuel to run UNRWA water wells affected by power outages.

### **C. United Nations system support to Palestinian institutions**

119. FAO supported government institutions in undertaking legislative reforms, which resulted in the drafting of an animal health law, pesticide by-law, plant health law and food safety law and the approval of the National Strategy for Food Safety (2017–2022). FAO supported the establishment of a national plant health laboratory and initiated the formulation of the first food and nutrition security policy for Palestine. FAO and WFP also promoted a pilot of the food insecurity scale survey by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics to monitor food insecurity.

120. ILO supported the launch of the Palestinian Social Security Corporation and has assisted in its delivery of a comprehensive social security system for Palestinian workers. ILO also supported the drafting of a law governing cooperatives.

121. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and its partners established a professional diploma training programme on supply chain management to serve the needs of Palestinian exporters, importers, customs brokers, government staff, young graduates, lawyers and other professionals. The programme was accredited by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education in 2017.

122. UNDP, UNICEF and UN-Women supported the Palestinian Bar Association, non-governmental organizations and university legal clinics in providing legal services to 14,337 people across the West Bank and Gaza.

123. UNDP, UNICEF and UN-Women supported the Palestinian National Legal Aid Committee in developing a national legal aid strategy. UNDP provided capacity support to police and justice institutions through the establishment of a unified complaint system; launched a gender strategy for the Palestinian Civil Police; trained specialized security and justice personnel on gender-based violence and juvenile justice-related issues; and opened a pilot one-stop centre in Ramallah for female victims of violence.

124. UNDP supported the establishment and institutionalization of the first national revolving fund for promoting Islamic microfinancing. The capacity of partner microfinance institutions to integrate business development services within their finance and investment products was developed.

125. UNFPA supported the completion of the third population, housing and establishment census in Palestine. UNFPA supported the establishment of the gender-based violence information management system, which is currently used by 21 organizations in the West Bank and Gaza.

126. UNICEF supported the vocational training centre of the Ministry of Social Development in Gaza to promote the reintegration of children in conflict with the law. A total of 11 boys deprived of freedom in Al-Rabee Detention Centre were judicially removed from detention and enrolled in a government vocational training centre as an alternative to detention. In addition, 176 formal justice actors (145 men and 31 women) were trained on restorative juvenile justice.

127. UNODC provided support to the justice and security sector institutions. A forensic science laboratory was opened within the Palestinian Civil Police. UNODC also supported the Ministry of Justice in integrating graduates in forensic medicine. Three forensic clinics have been opened to deal with sexual and gender-based violence cases from a legal perspective.

128. UNOPS supported the Ministry of the Interior in civilian oversight of the State security functions. The Ministry of the Interior and 17 Palestinian security entities have re-engineered key processes to reinforce civilian oversight mechanisms in legal services, strategic planning, human resources, complaints processing, and media and public relations.

129. UN-Habitat supported the Ministry of Local Government in the development of *State of Palestine: Cities Report 2016*, the first in the series, which presented data on and analysis of the urban context in Palestine, indicating urbanization trends and forces and highlighting obstacles that hinder sustainable development in Palestinian cities.

130. WFP coordinated the establishment of the inter-agency emergency operations room in Gaza, and 160 Gaza government staff were trained on food needs assessments for internally displaced persons in emergencies.

131. WFP supported the capacity of the Palestinian Civil Defence and delivered emergency response equipment for floods response, firefighting and search-and-rescue operations, and set up three emergency operation centres.

132. WHO supported the establishment of the Palestinian National Institute of Public Health, which aims to strengthen information systems and data collection and utilization, including through the establishment of e-registries for cause of death, cancer, maternal and child health, road traffic collisions and mammography screening.

## **D. Private sector development**

133. In Gaza, UNRWA disbursed 4,172 microfinance loans (\$6.30 million) in 2017. Of those, 3,660 loans (\$5,704,840) were provided to Palestine refugees and 1,788 loans (\$2,051,340) were extended to women.

134. In the West Bank, UNRWA disbursed 10,343 loans (\$14,554,716) in 2017, with Palestine refugees receiving 2,710 loans (\$3,569,368). Women received 40 per cent of all loans, while youth aged 18–30 years received 39 per cent.

135. The UNRWA “G-Gateway” social enterprise continued to promote employment by opening the global market to information technology specialists. Each year, approximately 1,000 Palestinians graduate with computer-related degrees in Gaza. In 2017, it employed 101 beneficiaries and provided 300 employment opportunities through its freelance services.

136. UNDP is supporting the Jericho Agro-Industrial Park microenterprise and small business owners and entrepreneurs in increasing their outreach, effectiveness and efficiency of business development services. UNDP is supporting the establishment of a profitable and sustainable business model from the photovoltaic-generated electricity (solar energy) in the same location.

## **E. Coordination of United Nations assistance**

137. Under the auspices of the Deputy Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process/Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator, collaboration and coordination between the numerous donor and United Nations forums continued during the reporting period. The humanitarian country team met regularly to agree on humanitarian advocacy and response measures. The United Nations country team continued to coordinate its development programming, in alignment with the priorities under the National Policy Agenda.

# **IV. Donor response to the crisis**

## **Budgetary and fiscal support**

138. The Palestinian Authority contained the overall deficit to 7.8 per cent of GDP in 2017 despite a decline in total net revenue, owing to a high reduction in expenditures as a proportion of GDP. However, the fiscal situation remained precarious with declining donor support. To finance the deficit, the Palestinian Authority continued to resort to borrowing from banks within the regulatory limit. During the year, donors provided \$544.5 million to the Palestinian Authority in external budgetary support and \$175 million in development finance. Arab donors accounted for 26.7 per cent of external budgetary support, and international donors accounted for the remaining part. In March 2018, the Palestinian Authority approved a unified (Gaza and West Bank) budget for the occupied Palestinian territory for 2018, which envisages a total spending of \$5.1 billion, with a financing gap of around \$490 million.

## **Donor coordination**

139. The reformed local aid coordination structure went into effect during the reporting period, conferring greater ownership on aid coordination to Palestinian government institutions that currently chair each of the 15 sector working groups.

140. The coordination of humanitarian assistance and advocacy continued to be led by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs during the reporting period.

141. During the reporting period, the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee held two regular meetings, on 18 September 2017 in New York, chaired by the then Minister for Foreign Affairs of Norway, Børge Brende, and on 20 March 2018 in Brussels, hosted by the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini, and chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Norway, Ine Eriksen Søreide; one extraordinary session was held on 31 January 2018 in Brussels, also hosted by Ms. Mogherini and chaired by Ms. Søreide.

## V. Unmet needs

142. In 2017, UNRWA was not able to raise the necessary funding for its programme budget and ended the year with a shortfall of approximately \$126.5 million. UNRWA emergency programmes and key projects also operated with large funding gaps. Through its 2017 Palestine emergency appeal, UNRWA continued to provide basic humanitarian assistance; however, funding levels reached 38.1 per cent only. Following the January 2018 announcement by the United States that it would withhold its contribution in 2018, the projected programme budget shortfall stood at \$446 million. On 22 January 2018, UNRWA launched its 2018 emergency appeals to raise \$808 million for the West Bank and Gaza, as well as for the Syrian regional crisis. A ministerial conference, attended by the Secretary-General, was held in Rome on 15 March 2018, entitled “Preserving dignity and sharing responsibility: mobilizing collective action for UNRWA”. The conference was convened by Egypt, Jordan and Sweden to help to alleviate the financial situation of UNRWA and saw pledges of approximately \$100 million. Currently, the UNRWA funding shortfall is less than \$250 million.

143. Should UNRWA, owing to a lack of funding, be forced to reduce, or suspend completely, its core and emergency services in Gaza in 2018, the impact would be significant, notably for 272,000 children who would lose access to education, on primary health-care as well as neonatal care and other life-saving services for over 1 million Palestine refugees, and on 1 million Palestine refugees living in poverty who would lose food assistance.

144. Of the \$3.5 billion pledged at the Cairo International Conference on Palestine in October 2014 for the recovery and reconstruction of Gaza, only 54 per cent (\$1.884 billion) has been disbursed. To complete the reconstruction, an estimated \$244 million is still needed, including \$200 million for the rehabilitation of 3,000 destroyed houses and 56,000 damaged houses, \$13 million for the reconstruction of a destroyed hospital, \$20 million for the energy infrastructure and \$11 million for the water infrastructure.

145. Given the continued humanitarian needs, the 2018–2020 Humanitarian Response Plan requires \$539.7 million for 2018, of which over half, or \$286.5 million, is also included in the UNRWA emergency appeal for the occupied Palestinian territory. At the end of the reporting period, only 5.4 per cent, or \$29 million, had been raised.

146. The *2018 Humanitarian Needs Overview* estimates that, of the 4.95 million Palestinians living in the occupied Palestinian territory, 2.5 million people will need humanitarian assistance in 2018. Of those, 1.6 million Gazans, 1.1 million children under the age of 18 and 1.4 million Palestine refugees will require humanitarian assistance in 2018. In 2018, at least 1.9 million Palestinians will experience, or are at

risk of, conflict and violence, displacement and denial of access to livelihoods, among other threats.

147. Moreover, United Nations agencies are seeking \$1.26 billion over five years to support development programming in the context of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework.

## VI. Challenges

148. The absence of a political process aimed at ending the conflict continues to be the single largest impediment to Palestinian development.

149. Continued Israeli settlement expansion, demolitions, closure, access and movement restrictions and other aspects of the military occupation continue to have a severe impact on the humanitarian, social and political life of the Palestinian population and its ability to exercise its fundamental rights. Continuing acts of violence, including acts of terror, and incitement perpetuate mutual fear and suspicion. The political division between the West Bank and Gaza places severe obstacles to addressing humanitarian needs and restoring a political horizon.

150. Development and humanitarian funding to the State of Palestine continued to decline during the reporting period. Significant UNRWA funding reductions in the next reporting period further demonstrate the need for strong donor coordination.

## VII. Conclusions

151. The operational context for the work of the United Nations in the reporting period was increasingly difficult as a result of the challenges outlined in the present report. The United Nations will continue to work towards the realization of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East on the basis of relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), [1397 \(2002\)](#), [1515 \(2003\)](#), [1850 \(2008\)](#), [1860 \(2009\)](#) and [2334 \(2016\)](#), an end to the occupation that began in 1967, and the establishment of a sovereign, democratic, viable and contiguous Palestinian State, existing side by side in peace with a secure Israel. It is only by realizing the vision of two States living side by side in peace, security and mutual recognition, with Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and Palestine, and all final status issues resolved permanently through negotiations, that the legitimate aspirations of both peoples will be achieved.

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Seventy-fourth session  
Item 73 (b) of the preliminary list\*  
Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian  
and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations,  
including special economic assistance**

**Economic and Social Council  
2019 session  
26 July 2018–24 July 2019  
Agenda item 14  
Implementation of the Declaration on the  
Granting of Independence to Colonial  
Countries and Peoples by the specialized  
agencies and the international institutions  
associated with the United Nations**

## Assistance to the Palestinian people

### Report of the Secretary-General

#### *Summary*

The present report, submitted in compliance with General Assembly resolution [73/256](#), contains an assessment of the assistance received by the Palestinian people, an assessment of the needs still unmet and proposals for responding to them. It provides a description of the efforts made by the United Nations, in cooperation with the Government of Palestine, donors and civil society, to support the Palestinian population and institutions.

The reporting period (1 April 2018–31 March 2019) was characterized by continued tensions and violence and the persistence of negative trends, further impeding the resumption of meaningful negotiations and affecting prospects for peace. The fiscal performance of the Palestinian Authority worsened, and total overseas development assistance declined sharply, leaving significant unmet needs.

During the reporting period, the United Nations continued to coordinate and deliver humanitarian and development assistance to the occupied Palestinian territory. A portion of that assistance targeted Palestinian individuals and communities in areas beyond the reach of the Palestinian Authority, including East Jerusalem and Area C, in the West Bank, and Gaza.

Under the Humanitarian Response Plan for the occupied Palestinian territory, \$350 million is sought for 2019 to provide basic food, protection, health care, shelter, water and sanitation to 1.4 million Palestinians who have been identified as those most in need of humanitarian interventions across the occupied Palestinian territory.

\* [A/74/50](#).



## I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolution [73/256](#), in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it, at its seventy-fourth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution, containing an assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people, an assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them. The reporting period is from April 2018 to March 2019.

2. Information on the political and socioeconomic situation is provided in several periodic reports prepared by United Nations entities and submitted to various United Nations bodies, including the monthly Security Council briefings by the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process; the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan; the annual report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA); and the biannual reports of the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians.

3. The humanitarian, economic and development needs of the Palestinian people are reflected in several complementary strategic and resource mobilization documents. Under the Humanitarian Response Plan, \$350 million is sought for 2019 to provide basic food, protection, health care, shelter, water and sanitation to 1.4 million Palestinians who have been identified as those most in need of humanitarian interventions across the occupied Palestinian territory. That is less than the amount sought for 2018, when 1.9 million Palestinians were targeted for assistance at a total cost of \$539.7 million. The reduction in the amount of funding requested and the number of people targeted does not, however, reflect a reduction in the level of humanitarian need in the occupied Palestinian territory.

4. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework for 2018–2022 presents the United Nations strategic response to Palestinian development priorities contained in the Palestinian National Policy Agenda for 2017–2022. The Framework places the Palestinian people at the centre of development programming, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and requires financial resources of approximately \$1.26 billion over five years, namely from 2018 to 2022.

5. Throughout the year, the Office of the Special Coordinator continued its efforts to support conflict prevention and a return to peace negotiations, and to promote coordination among the Government of Palestine, the United Nations, the international community and the Government of Israel.

## II. Overview of the current situation

### A. Political context

6. The reporting period was characterized by continued tensions and violence on the ground and the persistence of negative trends, further impeding a resumption of meaningful negotiations to end the Israeli occupation and resolve the conflict with a view to achieving the two-State solution on the basis of the 1967 borders and in line with relevant United Nations resolutions, international law and prior agreements. The dire humanitarian, economic and political situation in Gaza continues to be

compounded by severe movement and access restrictions imposed by Israel and divisions among the Palestinian factions that have persisted and have had negative implications on the socioeconomic, humanitarian and social aspects of life in the occupied Palestinian territory, most acutely in Gaza. Since March 2018, weekly protests along the perimeter fence between Gaza and Israel, in the context of the “Great March of Return” demonstrations, have witnessed increasing levels of violence, resulting in large numbers of Palestinians killed and injured by Israeli security forces. Israeli towns adjacent to the Gaza Strip were targeted by rockets, mortars and incendiary devices launched from Gaza by Hamas and other Palestinian militant groups. In the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, the situation remained volatile, with clashes, arrests, terrorist attacks and Israeli military operations taking place against the backdrop of the continued expansion of illegal settlement activities, violence between Israeli settlers and Palestinian civilians, the demolition and seizure of Palestinian structures and intensifying political challenges and financial pressures on the Palestinian Authority.

7. United Nations and Egyptian efforts to de-escalate the situation in Gaza continued throughout the reporting period, with the aim of avoiding war between Hamas and Israel by focusing on calming tensions, promoting humanitarian and economic assistance, promoting the easing of the closures and supporting efforts to advance Palestinian unity, including the return of Gaza under the full control of a single and legitimate Palestinian Government. Egypt continued to play a central role in those efforts, and Qatar and other donors provided crucial financial support towards meeting the most urgent needs of the population. There was no progress made on intra-Palestinian reconciliation.

8. In the occupied West Bank, the illegal planning, tendering and building of new housing units in settlements continued, with most indicators pointing to an increase compared with the previous reporting period. In Area C, Israeli authorities advanced plans for some 5,500 units and announced tenders for 3,300 more, compared with 4,500 and 1,200, respectively, during the previous reporting period. In East Jerusalem settlements, 2,100 units were advanced in the planning process, compared with 2,300 in the previous reporting period. Efforts to retroactively legalize structures deemed illegal under Israeli law in settlements continued.

9. The President of Palestine, Mahmoud Abbas, called for legislative elections, following a decision of the Palestinian Constitutional Court in December, and dissolved the Palestinian Legislative Council. At the time of writing, no moves had been undertaken to that end. On 10 March, President Abbas appointed Mohammad Shtayyeh as the new Prime Minister, tasked with forming a new government. In February 2019, Israel began implementing a law, passed by the Knesset in July 2018, under which the Israeli Government is required to freeze, from the clearance revenues it collects on behalf of and transfers to the Palestinian Authority, an amount equal to what Israel assesses to be the sums paid by the Authority “directly or indirectly” to Palestinians or to the families of Palestinians convicted by Israeli courts of involvement in alleged “terrorist activities” or other security-related offenses, as defined by Israeli law. In response, the Palestinian Authority informed the Israeli Government of its rejection of that unilateral decision, stating that, under the Protocol on Economic Relations between the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, no amount may be deducted without the consent of both parties, that it would not cease its social welfare payments to the families of prisoners and that it would refuse to accept any amounts of clearance revenues from Israel unless the full amount payable was provided. That situation is further compounding a prolonged decline in donor funding.

## **B. Humanitarian and socioeconomic context**

### **Economic and fiscal developments**

10. The economic conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory during the reporting period were characterized by stagnant growth and rising unemployment. In 2018, gross domestic product (GDP) grew by 0.9 per cent, owing to a 3.1 per cent growth in the West Bank and a 6.9 per cent contraction in Gaza. Gaza saw eight consecutive quarters of GDP contraction between the first quarter of 2017 and the fourth quarter of 2018.

11. At the end of 2018, the unemployment rate in the West Bank was 16.1 per cent, while that in Gaza was 50.5 per cent, bringing the unemployment rate for the occupied Palestinian territory to 29.1 per cent.

12. The fiscal performance of the Palestinian Authority worsened, and international development assistance declined sharply, leaving significant unmet needs on the ground. In February 2019, the Palestinian Authority faced a further fiscal setback when the Israeli Government withheld a portion of the monthly transferred clearance revenue (see para. 9 above). The Palestinian Authority responded by suspending its annual budget for 2019 and replacing it with an emergency budget. The austerity measures contained in the emergency budget are expected to have a negative impact on the Palestinian economy.

### **Humanitarian developments**

13. The reporting period witnessed a significant increase in violence and injuries compared with the previous period. Overall in the reporting period, violence across the occupied Palestinian territory resulted in the highest number of Palestinian fatalities by the Israeli security forces since 2014, with 299 Palestinians killed, and the highest number of recorded injuries since 2005, with 32,696 Palestinians injured. Most Palestinian fatalities (199) and 30,200 injuries occurred in Gaza in the context of the “Great March of Return” protests, with a quarter of the wounded injured by live ammunition. There were also 14 Israeli fatalities and 137 injuries.

14. In the reporting period, 60 Palestinian children (57 boys and 3 girls) and 4 women were killed in the occupied Palestinian territory, and 6,713 children and 1,812 women were injured. Most child fatalities (53) and injuries occurred in Gaza, in the context of the “Great March of Return”. In 2018, Palestinian children continued to be arrested and detained by the Israeli security forces for alleged security offences, in particular, throwing stones and Molotov cocktails during clashes. According to the Israel Prison Service, at the end of December 2018, of the 203 children detained, 93 were held in pretrial detention and/or during trial. Two children were held in administrative detention at the end of 2018.

15. A significant increase in settler-related violence in the West Bank in 2018. During the reporting period, 4 Palestinians were killed by Israeli settlers and 120 were injured, including at least 22 children. Palestinians also perpetrated attacks, with 6 settlers killed and 32 injured.

16. In January 2019, the Government of Israel decided not to renew the mandate of the Temporary International Presence in Hebron beyond 31 January. The Temporary International Presence provided observation and protective presence for some 7,000 Palestinians living in the H2 zone of the city. On 1 February, the Foreign Ministers of the five contributing countries (Italy, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey) issued a joint statement regretting the unilateral decision taken by Israel and stated that it constituted a “departure” from the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the

West Bank and the Gaza Strip (Oslo II Accords) and undermined one of the few established mechanisms for conflict resolution between Israelis and Palestinians.

17. The demolition of Palestinian residential, livelihood and service infrastructure in the West Bank continued. During the reporting period, the Israeli authorities demolished or seized 502 Palestinian-owned structures throughout the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, displacing 593 Palestinians, half of them children, compared with 314 structures demolished and 448 people displaced during the previous reporting period. Of the demolished structures, 65 had been provided by donors as humanitarian assistance.

18. During the reporting period, four Palestinian households were forcibly evicted after settlers took over their homes in East Jerusalem, affecting 21 people, including 10 children. As at January 2019, it is estimated that approximately 200 Palestinian households have eviction cases filed against them in East Jerusalem, placing more than 870 people at risk of displacement. In Area C, there are more than 13,000 Palestinian-owned structures against which demolition orders have been issued. Whole communities remain at the risk of forcible transfer with the still-impending case of Khan al-Ahmar-Abu al-Helu most prominent in 2018.

#### **Movement, humanitarian access and operational space**

19. During the reporting period, a multi-layered system of administrative and physical constraints on Palestinians imposed by Israel, citing security concerns, remained in place, including to fishing areas and farming lands near the fence inside Gaza and throughout the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Palestinian movement is still restricted in East Jerusalem, with West Bank identification card holders, except men over 55 and women over 50, needing permits to enter the city, and in the Israeli-controlled area of Hebron (H2 zone), where more than 100 obstacles, including 18 permanent checkpoints, separate part of the H2 zone from the rest of the city. Nearly 30 per cent of Area C is designated as “firing zones” for Israeli military training, where residence or access is prohibited.

20. The closures on the Gaza Strip, imposed by Israel citing security concerns, continued. Only a small minority of Palestinians in Gaza remain eligible for exit permits through the Israeli-controlled Erez crossing, primarily patients, businesspeople and the staff of international organizations. On average, in 2018, there were 9,566 exits per month from Gaza by permit holders through the Erez crossing, a 39 per cent increase compared with 2017. The average monthly number of referrals for Gaza patients in 2018, the majority of whom pass through Erez, was significantly higher than the monthly average for 2017, with 2,579 referrals per month in 2018, compared with 1,709 per month in 2017. Nevertheless, permit approval rates continue to decline, from 92.5 per cent in 2012 to 61 per cent in 2018.

21. The rate of approval of permit applications for United Nations national staff to leave Gaza was 62 per cent during 2018, up from 52 per cent in 2017. The total number of applications submitted in 2018 decreased by 20 per cent, however, owing primarily to the larger number of staff denied permits for security reasons and banned from reapplying for 12 months; that number is currently 137, compared with 41 staff at the end of 2017.

22. Kerem Shalom remained the almost exclusive crossing for the movement of commodities to and from Gaza, with some imports also allowed via the border with Egypt. On average, about 8,847 truckloads of goods entered Gaza per month in 2018, 11 per cent lower than the monthly average in the previous two years, while an average of 204 trucks exited Gaza per month, mostly to West Bank markets, nearly the same as in 2016–2017.

23. Between April 2018 and 31 March 2019, the Rafah crossing was open for a total of 250 days, a significant increase compared to the previous reporting period, when the crossing was open for 34 days. That is the highest number of open days since 2013, when the crossing was opened for 263 days. A total of 74,189 individuals exited to Egypt and 46,251 entered Gaza during the reporting period – 389 per cent more than in the previous reporting period, but less than in 2012 and 2013.

24. In January 2019, for the first time since 2005, Israel announced a partial expansion of the fishing limit, up to 12 nautical miles in the middle area off the Gaza coast, while access along the northern and southern areas continued to be restricted to 6 nautical miles. A further expansion up to 15 nautical miles was agreed to in March, effective 1 April 2019; that is the largest such expansion since 2000, despite it being less than the 20 nautical miles agreed under the Oslo Accords.

#### **Barrier**

25. The United Nations Register of Damage Caused by the Construction of the Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, established pursuant to General Assembly resolution ES-10/17, continued its outreach and claim intake activities to “serve as a record, in documentary form, of the damage caused to all natural and legal persons concerned as a result of the construction of the wall by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem”. More than 68,700 claims and over 1.5 million supporting documents have been collected. Claim intake activities are completed in all nine governorates and in 265 of the 269 Palestinian communities affected by the construction of the wall.

### **III. United Nations response**

#### **A. Human and social development**

26. During the reporting period, the United Nations continued to coordinate and deliver humanitarian and development assistance in the occupied Palestinian territory. A portion of that assistance targeted Palestinian individuals and communities in areas beyond the reach of the Palestinian Authority, including East Jerusalem and Area C, in the West Bank, and Gaza. The United Nations collectively sought to focus its efforts in the most vulnerable segments of the population.

#### **Education**

27. During the 2018/19 academic year, UNRWA provided free primary education (grades 1–9) to 278,938 students (143,973 boys and 134,965 girls) in 274 elementary and preparatory schools in Gaza and a further 46,310 students (27,658 girls and 18,652 boys) in 96 elementary and preparatory schools in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

28. In Gaza, to accommodate an expanding student body (7,091 students were added during the 2018/19 school year) and to reduce the number of facilities that operate on a double- and triple-shift basis, UNRWA undertook the construction or reconstruction of four schools, expanded three additional schools and commenced the design of three more schools.

29. UNRWA schools in the West Bank provided student support teams with training on inclusive education and disability inclusion. In addition, 240 teachers and 538 student family members were trained on positive discipline methods. One school in East Jerusalem was rehabilitated.

30. In Gaza, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) supported access to education through the reconstruction of four entirely damaged and 27 partially damaged schools and the rehabilitation of five vocational training centres and 21 university buildings.
31. UNDP improved access to safe and inclusive educational spaces for 8 educational facilities in Area C and East Jerusalem communities and provided grants to 84 schools in East Jerusalem.
32. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) supported the introduction of life skills in schools. Following the training, more than 9,700 adolescents conducted 427 youth-led initiatives, such as social enterprises, which resulted in 10 start-ups and the mobilization of 86 private sector organizations.
33. UNICEF supported behaviour change initiatives in schools, focusing on violence-free schools through improved discipline practices, the reduction of bullying and the promotion of conflict resolution and non-violence.
34. The UNICEF remedial education programme helped students to overcome learning difficulties and catch up on missed education. In 2018, remedial education support reached 4,500 vulnerable children, of which 41 per cent were girls.
35. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) provided training for teachers on inclusive education and child-centred pedagogy to support the participation of all students in the teaching and learning process.
36. UNESCO developed a skills forecasting tool that supports youth in education and career decision-making processes, to increase their chances of employment.

## **Health**

37. UNRWA continued to be a major provider of health-care services in the West Bank and Gaza. More than 4 million primary health-care patient consultations were provided during the reporting period. In Gaza, UNRWA provided primary health-care services through 22 health-care facilities and employed 933 personnel. In the West Bank, UNRWA operates 43 health-care facilities, including 24 primary health-care centres, 19 health points, one hospital and one non-communicable disease referral centre. Those facilities collectively employed 773 staff. Three health centres were rehabilitated in the West Bank during the reporting period. By the end of 2018, UNRWA had recorded an average of 82 visits per doctor per day in Gaza, and 76 in the West Bank. In addition, 25,440 Palestine refugees in the West Bank and a further 9,954 refugees in Gaza received health-care assistance.
38. In Gaza, the World Health Organization (WHO) worked in collaboration with a local university to introduce a diploma for general practitioners in primary health care. WHO also supported the establishment of the Palestinian National Institute of Public Health.
39. WHO worked with national partners to strengthen their capacity to prevent, manage and control non-communicable diseases. Through its primary health-care facilities, WHO implemented its Mental Health Gap Action Programme, training almost 1,600 staff members. The Programme supported the development of mental health emergency response plans in Gaza, including the establishment of six mental health emergency teams, the procurement of essential psychotropic drugs, infrastructure renovation at the Bethlehem psychiatric hospital and the establishment of mental health liaison units at seven general hospitals across the occupied Palestinian territory, including in East Jerusalem.

40. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) supported a breast cancer project in the occupied Palestinian territory, which decreased the average time from diagnosis to commencement of treatment from six months to seven days. UNFPA provided a total of 4,845 mammograms, supported the Ministry of Health in updating breast cancer treatment protocols and reached more than 58,000 women through awareness-raising activities on breast self-examinations.

41. UNFPA supported sexual and reproductive health services through the training of 292 physicians and midwives on national obstetric care protocols, the provision of critical sexual and reproductive health equipment to health-care facilities and the development of two new e-learning courses for midwives.

42. The United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) supported the establishment of the first Palestinian national rehabilitation centre in Bethlehem. The centre has supported the integration of drug treatment within the primary health-care system.

43. UNDP improved access to health-care services for 20,000 patients. Through UNDP support, the Yatta, Khalil Suleiman and Hebron hospitals have access to equipment and hospital space to increase the number of patients who can be given medical assistance. In Gaza, UNDP diversified the energy source for three hospitals through access to renewable energy.

44. In Jerusalem, UNDP supported the renovation of the oncology department at the Augusta Victoria Hospital. The East Jerusalem hospital network was provided with \$1.2 million to provide health care for patients in East Jerusalem not covered by the national health insurance scheme.

### **Water and sanitation**

45. UNICEF supported improved access to safe drinking water for vulnerable communities in Gaza. During the reporting period, water, sanitation and hygiene interventions by UNICEF reached a total of 145,400 people: 133,200 in Gaza and 12,200 in the West Bank.

46. UNICEF supported the construction of the first phase of the southern Gaza desalination plant, benefiting 75,000 people. In addition, UNICEF supported the construction of a 0.5 MW solar power plant, providing additional electricity to the plant.

47. UNICEF rolled out a pilot project for a local desalination unit to benefit around 3,000 people in Khan Yunis governorate in Gaza.

48. In Area C, UNICEF supported the supply of water to vulnerable communities, in addition to working with the Palestinian Water Authority and partners to connect communities to water networks.

49. UNDP supported 3,885 households with improved access to wastewater services in the West Bank and increased municipal wastewater services in four communities in the Tulkarm district. UNDP supported farmers in Rafah with greater access to water, through the construction of 20 water ponds.

### **Employment**

50. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) contributed to the creation of more than 890 temporary jobs through the rehabilitation of water-harvesting cisterns. Those cisterns will increase access to water for more than 500 herding families in the West Bank.



51. FAO supported 15 women's cooperatives in developing their businesses, reaching a combined total of 2,482 beneficiaries. Six women's cooperatives received training to enhance their skills in producing dried tomatoes and raisins.

52. UNDP contributed to the creation of 1,205 jobs across the occupied Palestinian territory and supported 226 small businesses in improving their business models. UNDP supported 40 projects in poverty-oriented infrastructure, which helped to generate 53,840 workdays in the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem, including 121 permanent jobs.

53. UNDP enabled 897 families to become more economically productive. One year after receiving the support, 70 per cent of households reported a tangible improvement in their overall livelihood conditions. UNDP supported 300 young people with improved access to career opportunities through skills training.

54. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) led the review of the Labour Law from a gender perspective. Draft amendments to seven articles of the Law were produced, in favour of women's economic empowerment, equal access to services and better work conditions.

55. ILO and UN-Women reached 2,100 women workers from the occupied Palestinian territory through awareness-raising activities on the inclusion of women in trade union. As a result, more than 1,000 women were registered with the unions.

56. The United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN-Habitat) and UN-Women provided support to nine female architects to improve their income and skills through temporary job placements in three municipalities in Gaza.

### **Targeted social protection**

57. UNICEF and the World Food Programme (WFP) implemented an e-voucher programme to provide the most vulnerable families in Gaza with blankets, clothing and hygiene kits during the winter. Families received e-vouchers valued between \$47 and \$106. The programme provided 6,000 vulnerable families with water, sanitation and hygiene support, 3,400 families with child protection support and 2,000 children with education support.

58. UNICEF provided support to the Ministry of Social Development to improve its information management capacity for the national social protection system. As a result, the Ministry issued the first national statistical report of beneficiaries of various Ministry programmes.

59. UNRWA distributed 395,740 food parcels to 21,516 Palestine refugee households (98,935 individuals) in Gaza. A further 36,125 beneficiaries were assisted through cash-based transfers in the West Bank. In 2018, the percentage of Palestine refugees identified by UNRWA as abject poor reached 77.8 per cent in Gaza and 72 per cent in the West Bank.

60. WFP provided emergency food assistance and, through a cash-based transfer system, enabled partners to provide water, sanitation and hygiene items and school uniforms to the targeted population. WFP continued to support the Palestinian Government's social safety net programme, under which 163,000 people in Gaza and the West Bank received cash-based transfers during the reporting period.

### **Culture**

61. UNESCO rehabilitated 10 cultural heritage sites in historic cities and rural localities, and 14 professionals were trained in cultural heritage preservation. The initiatives provided 20,000 working days as temporary job opportunities. UNESCO

supported the adoption of the Palestinian Government's first cultural heritage legislation, which entered into force on 3 June 2018.

62. UNDP supported the restoration of two cultural heritage sites in Nablus and Jericho.

### **Food security and agriculture**

63. FAO and WFP provided technical support to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics to carry out the 2018 survey on socioeconomic food security.

64. In the West Bank, FAO provided 2,115 herders with 317 million tons of drought-tolerant seeds for fodder crops, allowing them to cultivate an additional 25,380 dunums of grazing land. That led to the production of fodder worth more than \$2.6 million. In addition, FAO supported nine farming cooperatives in the West Bank, through the introduction of 24 new crop varieties (9,000 fruit tree seedlings).

65. FAO facilitated access to 137 rainwater-harvesting cisterns in the West Bank for farmers and herders. More than 6,000 herding families can now access 115 community water cisterns. In addition, 22 cisterns were provided for supplementary irrigation for rain-fed grapes in the West Bank. The intervention had a specific gender focus; 22 per cent of the beneficiaries were women farmers.

66. FAO carried out a series of trainings to promote good agriculture practices. In all, 1,727 people received support, including technical exchange visits, while 1,300 people were trained on water management and conservation techniques.

67. UNDP supported the rehabilitation of 1,500 dunums of agricultural land and undertook construction on 2 km of road to support better access to farmland.

68. UNDP provided four mobile veterinary clinics, to improve farmers' access to animal care, and supported three agriculture research stations, to introduce more resilient plants.

### **Human rights, women, children and youth**

69. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in the occupied Palestinian territory supported the drafting and submission of reporting under international human rights treaties and undertook a wide range of capacity-building activities targeting the Palestinian Government, civil society and the national human rights institution.

70. UNDP, UN-Women and UNICEF continued to promote the rule of law in the occupied Palestinian territory through the provision of free and direct legal aid services to more than 10,316 individuals. UNDP enabled access to pro bono legal aid services for 10,205 people in Gaza and the West Bank.

71. UNDP helped 180 young people to access job opportunities through internships and provided 28 young people with scholarships. UNDP helped 8,237 young people to access recreational activities, and 300 young people benefited from capacity-building and career training in Gaza. In total, 24,000 young people were supported in their engagements to develop their local communities.

72. UNDP, UN-Women and UNICEF supported the Palestinian Cabinet's endorsement of the family protection bill.

73. UN-Women launched a communication campaign designed to target police officers through awareness-raising activities on the importance of the enrolment of women in the police force.

74. UN-Women provided a capacity-building programme for the justice and security sector service providers to increase knowledge in areas relating to violence against women, women's rights and gender equality.
75. UN-Women provided officials from four ministries and representatives of five civil society organizations with training on Islam and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.
76. In Gaza, UN-Women supported 579 women, including 125 women who benefited from business skills training and skill-matching cash-for-work opportunities. In particular, 407 women were able to access protection-related services, including gender-based violence case management, psychosocial and legal counselling, awareness-raising and referrals, and 47 older women and women with disabilities were provided with physiotherapy and rehabilitation support.
77. UN-Habitat and UN-Women supported the participation of women and young people in reconstruction planning and implementation. In particular, 4,854 young people and adolescents from marginalized areas identified their specific needs and priorities in relation to public spaces and related services.
78. UN-Women delivered awareness-raising sessions on issues relating to gender equality to 3,338 fathers, 83 mothers, 996 male and 38 female university students, 3,383 male and 67 female elementary and preparatory school students, 40 male teachers and counsellors and 377 additional men.
79. UNESCO organized a series of training courses and open dialogues between journalists and members of Palestinian security forces, with a focus on freedom of expression and journalist safety.
80. UNFPA upgraded 20 health facilities to detect, treat and refer women and girls who are survivors of gender-based violence. Some 1,200 service providers were trained to provide medical, psychosocial and legal services for survivors of gender-based violence, and 6,000 women received medical, psychosocial and legal services in clinics and hospitals. In addition, 600 community sessions, attended by 3,000 women and men, were conducted by 250 community leaders who received training on sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence. UNFPA supported 250 survivors of gender-based violence through vocational training and small grants.
81. In Gaza, UNFPA supported more than 150 young people in initiating partnerships and dialogue with 460 community members, aimed at raising awareness of Security Council resolution 2250 on youth and peace and security. In total, UNFPA reached 14,100 young people with empowerment programmes.
82. UNICEF and its partners provided 7,000 children (including 3,700 females) with structured child protection interventions. Of those reached, more than 1,300 children received individual case management support.
83. UNICEF supported child protection sub-cluster actors to reach more than 2,100 children injured during the protests.
84. UNICEF supported a local NGO to train school counsellors in UNRWA schools to deliver awareness raising sessions to students on the legal rights of children when arrested or detained. UNICEF reached 2,000 of the most at-risk children with protection and prevention services, including both group and individual psychosocial support.
85. UNODC and UNRWA delivered a Training of Trainers to promote sports to prevent crime, violence and drug use and build resilience of at-risk youth to strengthen their life skills. By November 2018, 26 summer camp instructors and 60 sports school instructors received the training. UNODC delivered a training for 30

UNRWA counsellors and physical education instructors on crime prevention through sports.

86. UNRWA provided counselling services to 243 survivors (45 men and boys and 198 women and girls) of gender-based violence and child abuse and 351 survivors (257 men and 94 women) of elder neglect in the West Bank. Among those cases, 33 individuals received internal assistance. An additional 24 cases were referred for external legal, shelter, specialized health and/or social services. Furthermore, 46 emergency cases received immediate assistance and 1,402 individuals received group counselling services.

87. In Gaza, UNRWA provided mental health and psychosocial support to vulnerable adults and children through its education and health programmes. In addition, psychosocial assistance was extended to support 1,475 adult survivors of gender-based violence (1,214 individually and 261 through group counselling). Of those cases, 906 were referred to legal counsellors who provided guidance on issues relating to women's rights, separation and divorce, custody and personal property. Awareness-raising sessions delivered by legal counsellors reached an additional 2,733 beneficiaries, while community awareness and prevention activities relating to gender-based violence, domestic violence, neglect and sexual abuse reached a further 2,272 Palestine refugees. The Young Women Leaders programme provided 173 female university graduates with leadership, life-skills and self-development training. In all, 160 Programme graduates participated in a five-month work placement programme in different organizations and companies across Gaza.

#### **Environment, housing and urban development**

88. UN-Habitat supported spatial planning projects in three marginalized municipalities in Gaza benefitting more than 15,000 residents.

89. UN-Habitat and UN-Women inaugurated safe and inclusive public spaces in two municipalities in Gaza, developed using technology to engage women and young people in designing public spaces. Together, the two public spaces serve more than 130,000 community members.

90. UN-Habitat delivered spatial planning support in partnership with over 20 local implementing partners, targeting more than 1.5 million Palestinians in more than 200 communities across the West Bank.

91. Through UNDP support, 200 vulnerable families benefited from improved access to adequate, safe and affordable housing in East Jerusalem.

92. The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) supported the installation of rooftop solar systems in 188 vulnerable households in Gaza, enabling access to a clean and sustainable source of electricity.

### **B. United Nations system emergency assistance**

93. Since 30 March 2018, Palestinian injuries in Gaza have increased significantly owing to the "Great March of Return" protests and, to a lesser extent, other incidents. To respond to this crisis, humanitarian agencies have prioritized three areas of intervention: emergency health care; protection monitoring; and mental health and psychosocial support.

94. As from February 2019, more than 2,200 families (about 12,300 individuals) whose homes were destroyed during the 2014 escalation of hostilities remain internally displaced in Gaza, owing mainly to a lack of funding and limited access to basic construction materials. An urgent gap in assistance remains for around 1,600

internally displaced families who require cash support to secure adequate accommodation. Many of those families are among the poorest and are routinely vulnerable to forced eviction owing to their inability to pay their rent, for which they depend on transitional shelter cash assistance.

95. The United Nations Mine Action Service carried out 78 risk assessments, covering 674,062 m<sup>2</sup> of land and 52 km of roads. Those assessments enabled the implementation of recovery projects valued at \$70 million, including the reconstruction and refurbishment of roads, water supply and sewage treatment systems, sports facilities and schools.

#### **Emergency agriculture support**

96. FAO rehabilitated seven groundwater wells to improve pumping efficiency and extraction management. Water supplied by those wells is currently managed by three water user committees established and capacitated with support from FAO. In addition, FAO supported the establishment of 10 water user committees to manage water usage in the Jordan valley. More than 3,800 people (810 households) benefited from 61 km of water irrigation conveyance systems that were rehabilitated to reduce leakage.

97. In Gaza, FAO distributed mite treatments to 278 beekeepers to protect 15,000 beehives from an infestation of varroosis.

#### **Emergency food support**

98. UNICEF provided screening for malnutrition for more than 18,700 children under the age of 5 in Gaza. Of those screened, 237 children were found to be suffering from severe acute malnutrition and 2,700 were found to be suffering from moderate acute malnutrition. All those found suffering from malnutrition were referred for treatment.

99. UNRWA distributed emergency food parcels to 955,120 individuals, a stark increase compared with the 80,000 persons reliant on food assistance in 2000.

100. In 2018, UNRWA and WFP provided in-kind food assistance to more than 37,000 members of Bedouin herder communities. A further 7,843 food-insecure refugee households (45,887 individuals) residing outside the 19 refugee camps in the West Bank were provided with electronic food vouchers.

101. In the West Bank, UNRWA completed a full reassessment of its emergency caseload located outside of camps, which resulted in the identification of refugee households living beneath the abject poverty line. In the first quarter of 2019, a total of 3,620 refugee households were supported with emergency cash assistance.

102. In Gaza, WFP provided 208,000 food-insecure non-refugee Palestinians with cash-based transfers and 35,000 non-refugee Palestinians with in-kind food parcels.

103. In the West Bank, WFP provided food assistance to 74,000 food-insecure non-refugee Palestinians through cash-based transfers and provided 37,000 non-refugee Palestinians with in-kind food parcels.

#### **Emergency education support**

104. UNICEF facilitated access to education for approximately 5,000 students and teachers in the West Bank, where students and teachers face access restrictions owing to checkpoints and road closures. UNICEF provided psychosocial support for teachers and students to mitigate the effects of conflict-related violence.

105. UNICEF distributed more than 14,000 emergency education supply kits for vulnerable students in Gaza and facilitated emergency fuel delivery to operate generators in schools and correction centres in Gaza for the administration of the general secondary education certificate examination (*tawjihi*).

106. The Mine Action Service provided risk education on explosive remnants of war to 3,549 at-risk persons in Gaza, including 2,542 children, and implemented community-based resilience training focused on the empowerment of women. The training reached 8,305 participants, including 7,084 women. In 2018, there were nine victims of explosive remnants of war, including four children. The Service provided support to meet the explosive ordnance disposal requirements of all United Nations-affiliated school facilities in Gaza.

### **Emergency health support**

107. UNFPA contributed to the strengthening and preparedness of the health-care system to respond to sexual and reproductive health needs through the training of 50 health-care providers. UNFPA provided and distributed 60 safe delivery kits to support safe emergency births in Gaza. UNFPA trained 75 health-care professionals on the Minimum Initial Service Package for Reproductive Health in humanitarian settings.

108. UNICEF supported the provision of essential emergency health-care supplies to ensure access to essential life-saving health and nutrition services for women with high-risk pregnancies, lactating women and newborn and young children in Gaza.

109. UNICEF improved postnatal home visit services for more than 6,600 newborn children and their mothers, contributing to a 75 per cent reduction in complicated cases and referrals to hospitals.

110. In 2018, UNRWA school counsellors provided individual counselling to 9,350 at-risk children (5,230 boys and 4,120 girls) and structured group counselling to 10,808 children (5,061 boys and 5,747 girls) attending schools in Gaza. In addition, counsellors in UNRWA health centres provided psychosocial and protection interventions to 5,915 clients (952 men and 4,963 women), primarily in the form of individual and group counselling (2,835 were supported individually and 3,080 through group counselling). Of the 5,915 clients, 906 benefited from referrals to legal aid.

111. In the West Bank, the UNRWA emergency health programme supported six mobile health clinics operating in 50 communities facing significant obstacles in accessing health services. Those clinics served a catchment population of 130,351 individuals and delivered 78,762 patient consultations during the reporting period.

112. UNRWA provided mental health and psychosocial support to 46 Bedouin and herder communities in the West Bank, including in the East Jerusalem periphery.

113. WHO procured essential medical supplies and drugs to address critical shortages in the health sector, with a focus on Gaza.

114. WHO provided support to the Ministry of Health and partners to set up and strengthen a trauma management system in Gaza. WHO contributed equipment and technical support for trauma stabilization points close to the Gaza fence, which provide triage and life-saving initial treatment to reduce the strain on hospital services. To assist health services in coping with the massive burden of limb injuries, WHO worked with partners to expand limb reconstruction and patient rehabilitation services. WHO helped to equip hospitals with alternative energy sources, including solar energy.

### **Emergency housing support**

115. Under the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism, UNOPS supported the import of reconstruction materials to Gaza. In 2018, around 326,600 tons of cement were imported. Project materials went to building or preparing for the rebuilding of homes for 7,848 Gazan families. The project used local suppliers, helping to boost the local economy.

116. UNOPS completed the first phase of the reconstruction of destroyed houses in Gaza, benefiting 155 families. Another 566 families will be targeted for the second phase.

117. Between the end of the 2014 hostilities and February 2019, UNRWA assistance has allowed more than 85,326 families to complete the repair of their homes, while more than 4,163 families have completed or were in the process of rebuilding their entirely destroyed homes.

118. UNRWA provided cash assistance to 58 Palestine refugee families (303 individuals) following home demolitions carried out by the Israeli authorities. In addition, 484 Palestine refugee families (653 individuals) received cash assistance and referrals to meet humanitarian needs caused by search-and-arrest operations carried out by the Israeli security forces in Palestine refugee camps that led to damaged homes and emotional trauma.

119. UNDP supported the rehabilitation of 55 partially damaged houses in Rafah and rebuilt 203 totally damaged houses.

### **Emergency income generation**

120. During the reporting period, UNRWA employed 13,776 area personnel to manage and implement its operations throughout Gaza.

121. In 2018, UNRWA facilitated short-term employment for 10,139 individuals. The total number of jobs created was equal to approximately 690,000 working days and collectively injected some \$8 million into the local economy in Gaza. In addition, UNRWA spent \$60.9 million in 2018 on construction projects and self-help shelter repair and reconstruction initiatives, generating the equivalent of 3,125 full-time jobs. The Sulafa Embroidery Centre provided a further 306 women with income generation opportunities.

122. In 2018, UNRWA provided emergency assistance through the provision of cash-for-work opportunities to 5,913 households (indirectly benefiting 32,944 individuals) in 19 refugee camps in the West Bank. From August through December 2018, 7,338 individuals, assessed as abject poor, were provided with emergency cash assistance.

123. UNDP provided \$11 million in short-term financial support to address the urgent needs of the people of Gaza.

### **Emergency water and sanitation support**

124. In 2018, UNICEF supported improved access to sustainable and at-scale sanitation services, wastewater networks and flood prevention systems, reaching 28,000 people. In Gaza, UNICEF, together with the Palestinian Water Authority, finalized the construction of a detention basin and overflow line in Rafah, which significantly reduced the annual flood risk for 20,000 people. To help families to reduce the spread of waterborne diseases, UNICEF provided 15,900 vulnerable households with family hygiene kits.

125. UNRWA continued to support the functioning of water wells, desalination plants, wastewater treatment and waste management services in Gaza, through the

provision of 3.1 million litres of fuel to 9 UNRWA installations and 169 non-UNRWA facilities.

126. In 2018, UNRWA provided solid waste management services in 8 Palestine refugee camps in Gaza, where approximately 560,000 Palestine refugees reside, and in 19 camps in the West Bank, where some 256,000 reside.

### **C. United Nations system support to Palestinian institutions**

127. FAO and ILO delivered a training-of-trainers course to 23 participants from the new Cooperative Works Agency, the Ministry of Agriculture, cooperative unions and other groups providing services to cooperatives, to train 40 agricultural and women cooperatives in the West Bank.

128. OHCHR provided technical assistance to the Palestinian Government in the preparation of State party reports to human rights treaty bodies and in preparation for the constructive dialogue with the treaty bodies. Furthermore, OHCHR provided institution-building support to the Palestinian Government, in particular in relation to the set-up of its national preventive mechanism under the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

129. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development provided advisory services to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and the Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute, covering econometric modelling of the Palestinian economy with the goal of assessing alternative policy options and forecasting key socioeconomic variables.

130. UNFPA provided support to the Ministry of Health to develop a national sexual and reproductive health strategy for the 2018–2022 period and to strengthen the gender-based violence referral system. UNFPA also supported the Ministry in developing an advocacy strategy with an action plan on the clinical management of rape, which was followed by capacity-building for 78 health and psychosocial professionals of the Ministry.

131. UN-Habitat supported municipalities in the practice of participatory planning processes, through the development of a manual for participatory spatial planning in Gaza.

132. As a result of the UNICEF-supported pilot project for early childhood development services, an estimated 3.8 per cent of families that have young children with developmental delays and disabilities were reached and supported at facilities in three districts in the West Bank and five facilities in Gaza.

133. UNICEF supported a shift towards more learner-centred approaches and effective integration of life skills in schools, through a programme that trained 540 teachers, 105 supervisors and 100 principals in 100 schools across the occupied Palestinian territory.

134. UNICEF supported mainstreaming education in emergencies, through improved information management on incidents affecting education and the completion of the first national contingency plan for the education sector.

135. UNODC supported the forensic science laboratory within the Palestinian Civil Police and supported forensic doctors in obtaining higher specialty degrees in forensics at the University of Jordan. In 2018, one doctor completed his studies and five received training on sexual and gender-based violence.



136. UNOPS provided technical assistance to the High Judicial Council for the establishment of a new functional general directorate for facilities management. That support was aimed at strengthening Council capacity and governance in developing and maintaining its facilities.

137. UNOPS supported the Public Prosecution office, which is the office of the Attorney General, by refurbishing, furnishing and equipping rooms for women and children in seven prosecution facilities in the West Bank.

138. UNOPS supported the Palestinian Authority security forces by equipping its regional maintenance facilities, thus strengthening its capacity to perform routine, comprehensive and emergency maintenance of its fleet of vehicles.

#### **D. Private sector development**

139. UNRWA extended 2,687 loans to Palestine refugees in Gaza during the reporting period, a decline of 35.6 per cent compared with the previous year. Those loans were valued at \$3.36 million, a decline of 53.4 per cent compared with the previous year. In the West Bank, 9,784 loans, valued at \$13.86 million, were disbursed during the reporting period, with Palestine refugees receiving 2,410 loans valued at \$3.20 million. Women received 42 per cent of all loans, while young people (aged 18–30 years) received 40 per cent.

140. UNDP completed the rehabilitation and consolidation of the Gaza Industrial Estate, targeting 2,000 labourers, including 30 women.

#### **E. Coordination of United Nations assistance**

141. Under the auspices of the Deputy Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and United Nations Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, collaboration and coordination between the numerous donor and United Nations forums continued during the reporting period. The humanitarian country team met regularly to agree on humanitarian advocacy and response measures. The United Nations country team continued to coordinate its development programming, in alignment with the priorities of the Palestinian National Policy Agenda for 2017–2022.

### **IV. Donor response to the crisis**

#### **Budgetary and fiscal support**

142. In 2018, the overall budget deficit (before financing) of the Palestinian Authority increased to 12 per cent of GDP. To finance the deficit, the Palestinian Authority relied on donor support and financing from national banks. During the year, donors provided the Palestinian Authority with approximately \$515 million in budgetary support and an additional \$158 million in development finance.

143. During the year, donor support to the occupied Palestinian territory declined sharply owing to a decision by the United States of America to withdraw support to UNRWA and divert a significant portion of the programme budget of the United States Agency for International Development elsewhere.

#### **Donor coordination**

144. The reformed local aid coordination structure, which went into effect during the previous reporting period, continued to function as the main forum for the Palestinian

Government-led coordination of donor-funded development interventions in 15 sectors.

145. During the reporting period, the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee held one regular meeting, on 27 September 2018 in New York, which resulted in an agreement on a package of urgent humanitarian and economic interventions for Gaza, including projects to alleviate the energy crisis, provide emergency health care, support water, sanitation and hygiene facilities and improve the economic situation. The projects had a total price tag of \$210 million over a period of six months, of which nearly \$113 million was received. Funding received to date has enabled UNOPS to procure and deliver fuel to the Gaza power plant, increasing electricity supply in Gaza from about 4 to 5 hours per day to 12 to 15 hours per day. It has also enabled the delivery of essential medicines and the performance of thousands of emergency surgeries. Funds mobilized have created thousands of temporary jobs in both the public and private sectors in Gaza. In addition, the United Nations has enhanced its presence on the ground in Gaza to facilitate the smooth implementation of projects, in coordination with the Palestinian Authority and international stakeholders, through the establishment of a Project Management Unit.

## V. Unmet needs

146. Under the Humanitarian Response Plan for the occupied Palestinian territory for 2019, \$350 million is sought to fund assistance and protection for the 1.4 million vulnerable Palestinians identified as being most in need of humanitarian assistance and protection. That significant reduction compared with the Plan for 2018 reflects an attempt to prioritize the most urgent needs in the face of record-low funding levels: only 46 per cent of the funding for the 2018 Plan was secured, significantly lower than the global average of nearly 60 per cent for all humanitarian response plans worldwide. The shortfall reflects a trend of reduced funding for humanitarian agencies across the occupied Palestinian territory.

147. In 2018, UNRWA experienced the greatest financial challenge in its history. Following the January 2018 announcement by the United States that it would withhold its contribution in 2018, the projected programme shortfall stood at \$446 million. That shortfall affected the Agency's emergency operations throughout the occupied Palestinian territory, forcing it to take mitigating measures and implement changes to some of its emergency interventions. To avoid interruptions in the provision of critical humanitarian assistance, other interventions had to be scaled back or discontinued during the second half of the year, including, in Gaza, the community mental health and job-creation programmes, as well as rental subsidies to families made homeless because of the 2014 hostilities; and, in the West Bank, the cash-for-work, community mental health and mobile health clinic interventions. Protection capacities were reduced and adjusted to accommodate a constrained budget. In January 2019, UNRWA announced an annual budget of \$1.2 billion to fund the Agency's core services and humanitarian assistance for 5.4 million Palestine refugees. That is the amount needed to keep UNRWA operations at the same level as they were in 2018.

## VI. Challenges

148. The absence of a political process aimed at ending the occupation and achieving a viable two-State solution continues to be the largest impediment to Palestinian development. Continued Israeli settlement expansion, demolitions, closures, access and movement restrictions and other aspects of the military occupation continue to

have a severe impact on the humanitarian, social and political life of Palestinians and their ability to exercise their fundamental human rights. Violence and incitement continue to perpetuate mutual fear and suspicion. The political division between the West Bank and Gaza places severe obstacles to addressing humanitarian needs and restoring a political horizon. Decreased funding to the State of Palestine, and to the United Nations, during the reporting period poses a further challenge to the provision of development and humanitarian assistance.

## VII. Conclusions

149. The operational context for the work of the United Nations in the reporting period was increasingly difficult as a result of the challenges outlined in the present report. The United Nations will continue to work towards the realization of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East on the basis of relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#), [338 \(1973\)](#), [1397 \(2002\)](#), [1515 \(2003\)](#), [1850 \(2008\)](#), [1860 \(2009\)](#) and [2334 \(2016\)](#), an end to the occupation that began in 1967 and the establishment of a sovereign, democratic, viable and contiguous Palestinian State, existing side by side in peace with a secure Israel. It is only by realizing the vision of two States living side by side in peace, security and mutual recognition, with Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and Palestine, and all final status issues resolved permanently through negotiations, that the legitimate aspirations of both peoples will be achieved.

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# General Assembly Economic and Social Council

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Item 73 (b) of the preliminary list\***  
**Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and  
disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including  
special economic assistance**

**Economic and Social Council  
2020 session  
25 July 2019–22 July 2020  
Agenda item 14  
Implementation of the Declaration on the  
Granting of Independence to Colonial  
Countries and Peoples by the specialized  
agencies and the international institutions  
associated with the United Nations**

## Assistance to the Palestinian people

### Report of the Secretary-General

#### *Summary*

The present report, submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution [74/117](#), contains an assessment of the assistance received by the Palestinian people and proposals for responding to unmet needs. It provides a description of the efforts made by the United Nations, in cooperation with the Government of Palestine, donors and civil society, to support Palestinian people and institutions.

The reporting period (1 April 2019–31 March 2020) was characterized by continued tensions and violence and the persistence of negative trends, further impeding the resumption of meaningful negotiations and affecting prospects for peace. The fiscal performance of the Palestinian Authority was adversely affected by a dispute over the withholding by Israel of tax revenues owed to the Palestinian Authority and the decline of overseas development assistance, leaving significant unmet needs. The situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory was further compounded by the outbreak of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in March 2020.

During the reporting period, the United Nations continued to coordinate and deliver humanitarian and development assistance to the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Some of that assistance targeted Palestinian individuals and communities in areas beyond the reach of the Palestinian Authority, including East Jerusalem and Area C, in the occupied West Bank, and Gaza.

Under the 2020 Humanitarian Response Plan for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, \$348 million is sought to provide basic food, protection, health care, shelter, water and sanitation to 1.5 million Palestinians who have been identified as those most in need of humanitarian interventions across the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

\* [A/75/50](#).



## I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 74/117, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it, at its seventy-fifth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution, containing an assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people, an assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them. The reporting period is from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

2. Information on the political and socioeconomic situation of the Occupied Palestinian Territory is provided in several periodic reports prepared by United Nations entities and submitted to various United Nations bodies, including the monthly Security Council briefings by the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process; the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan; the annual report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA); and the biannual reports of the Office of the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians.

3. The humanitarian, economic and development needs of the Palestinian people are reflected in several complementary strategic and resource mobilization documents. Under the 2020 Humanitarian Response Plan for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, \$348 million is sought to provide basic food, protection, health care, shelter, water and sanitation to 1.5 million Palestinians who have been identified as those most in need of support across the Occupied Palestinian Territory. That is comparable to the 2019 Humanitarian Response Plan (\$350 million), but significantly lower than the amount sought for 2018 (\$539.7 million). The decrease does not reflect a reduction in the level of need; rather, it is an acknowledgement of continuing underfunding for humanitarian operations throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory: 73 per cent of the requested funding for the 2019 Humanitarian Response Plan was secured. That means that nearly one million Palestinians in need of humanitarian assistance, mainly in the Gaza Strip, will not receive any assistance through the 2020 Humanitarian Response Plan, even if it is fully funded.

4. The global outbreak of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is likely to exacerbate existing humanitarian needs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and reverse development gains, with far-reaching socioeconomic consequences.

5. The inter-agency COVID-19 response plan for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, released in April 2020, calls for \$41.9 million to respond to the public health needs and immediate humanitarian consequences of the pandemic. During the reporting period, the humanitarian country team, led by the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, commenced implementation of the plan, in support of the Government's efforts to prevent further transmission of the disease in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, provide adequate care for patients and their families, and mitigate the worst effects of the pandemic. At the same time, preparations also commenced for a broader socioeconomic recovery plan of the United Nations in support of the Government of Palestine.

6. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework for 2018–2022 presents the United Nations strategic response to Palestinian development priorities contained in the Palestinian National Policy Agenda for 2017–2022. The Framework

places the Palestinian people at the centre of development programming, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and requires financial resources of approximately \$1.26 billion over five years.

7. Throughout the reporting period, the Office of the Special Coordinator continued its efforts to support conflict prevention and a return to peace negotiations, and to promote coordination among the Government of Palestine, the United Nations, the international community and the Government of Israel.

## **II. Overview of the current situation**

### **A. Political context**

8. The overall situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory continued to be characterized by continued tensions and violence and the persistence of negative trends, further impeding the resumption of meaningful negotiations and affecting prospects for peace. In addition, the prospect of the annexation by Israel of parts of the occupied West Bank is a growing threat. Such steps, if implemented, would not only constitute a serious violation of international law, but they would also effectively end the prospect of the two-State solution and close the door to negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians.

9. In March 2020, COVID-19 began to spread in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Since the start of the outbreak, both the Palestinian Authority and Israel have coordinated and taken far-reaching measures to try to contain the disease. Technical cooperation between the parties has been effective, including with regard to the movement and provision of medical goods. However, areas of tension remain, including in East Jerusalem and Hebron, that could undermine efforts to combat the spread of the disease.

10. On 28 January, the United States of America presented its “Peace to Prosperity” vision for peace between Israelis and Palestinians. Senior Israeli officials welcomed the United States vision. The Palestinian leadership rejected it, instead calling on the international community to establish a multilateral framework to advance the peace process based on international law and relevant United Nations resolutions. Palestinian officials stated that any Israeli move to annex parts of the occupied West Bank would cancel all signed bilateral agreements and lead to regional turmoil. The League of Arab States and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation also rejected the United States vision, while the European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy noted that the proposal departed from “internationally agreed parameters”. The United Nations position on the issue is defined by relevant United Nations resolutions, international law and bilateral agreements. The United Nations remains committed to resolving the conflict on these bases and realizing the vision of two States – Israel and Palestine – living side by side in peace and security on the basis of pre-1967 lines, with Jerusalem as the capital of both States.

11. In Gaza, the dire humanitarian, economic and political situation persists, exacerbated by the absence of a political horizon, division among Palestinian factions and the severe movement and access restrictions imposed by Israel. Against that backdrop, protests at the Gaza perimeter fence continued for most of the reporting period. While most demonstrations remained relatively peaceful, some protesters engaged in violent activities and attempts to breach the fence. The Israel Defense Forces responded with riot dispersal means, including tear gas, and live ammunition, in some cases fatally. The indiscriminate firing of rockets, mortars and incendiary devices by Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad and other militants from Gaza also continued, in addition to strikes by the Israel Defense Forces against what they

defined as “militant targets”. Nevertheless, relative calm has prevailed since November 2019, including throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, between Israel and Palestinian armed groups in Gaza.

12. Egyptian-led mediation efforts supported by the United Nations prevented a full-scale escalation in Gaza on several occasions during the reporting period, allowing for, among other things, the implementation of some of the projects outlined in the package of urgent humanitarian and economic interventions for Gaza agreed upon by the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee in September 2018. In December 2019, the organizers of the protests along the Gaza perimeter fence announced that the weekly demonstrations at the fence would be on hold until the end of March. That continued to be the case through to the end of the reporting period.

13. More than two years since the October 2017 Egyptian-brokered intra-Palestinian reconciliation agreement, the United Nations continues to support Egyptian-led efforts to advance Palestinian unity, aimed at reunifying Gaza and the occupied West Bank under a single, democratic and legitimate national government. After the announcement of the United States vision, several Palestinian officials called for the resumption of the national dialogue. A delegation from the Fatah Central Committee visited Gaza from 7 to 12 February 2020. However, efforts to enable a visit of West Bank factions to Gaza were not successful during the reporting period. Between 27 February and 17 March, the Russian Federation hosted a series of bilateral discussions with representatives of Palestinian factions on the need to advance intra-Palestinian unity.

14. In the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, acts of violence continued, including daily clashes, military operations, settler-related violence and various other incidents. There has been a significant increase in settler violence against Palestinians and their property since the outbreak of COVID-19 (73 incidents registered in March, compared to 39 in February). The most affected areas remained Nablus, particularly around the Yitzhar settlement bloc, followed by Hebron and Ramallah governorates. Tensions at the holy sites in Jerusalem continued.

15. Israeli settlement expansion more than doubled in Area C of the occupied West Bank during the reporting period. The Israeli authorities advanced plans for 13,700 settlement units, 4,000 of which reached the final stage of approval, and announced tenders for 2,400 units. In the previous reporting period, plans for 5,500 units were advanced and 3,300 tenders were announced. In occupied East Jerusalem settlements, plans for 1,300 units were advanced, compared with 2,100 in the previous reporting period. Tenders for 2,100 housing units were announced, including 1,077 units in the Givat HaMatos settlement located between the Palestinian neighbourhood of Beit Safafa in East Jerusalem and Bethlehem, impeding the former’s connection with a future Palestinian State. Moreover, on 25 February, Israel announced that it was advancing two plans for a total of 3,500 units in the E1 area which, if implemented, would expand the settlement of Ma’ale Adumim towards Jerusalem, severing the connection between the northern and southern West Bank and severely undermining the possibility of a viable and contiguous Palestinian State. Overall, about 30 per cent of the units advanced, approved or tendered during the reporting period are to be built in outlying locations, deep inside the occupied West Bank.

16. On 26 September, at the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly, the President of the State of Palestine, Mahmoud Abbas, announced his intention to set a date for Palestinian elections. Despite broad internal political agreement and a series of compromises by all factions, President Abbas has not issued a decree calling for elections because Israel has yet to agree that elections can take place in East Jerusalem. The emergence of COVID-19 is another obstacle to the holding of elections in 2020.

17. Notwithstanding the continued challenges posed by the Israeli occupation, Palestinian women remain concerned about safety and security, livelihoods, employment opportunities, lack of political participation and access to education, health care and other services. In Gaza, women increasingly bear the brunt of the dire humanitarian conditions. Women are required to support their families while men are unemployed. Many live with extended families and struggle to find employment. In an effort to address that situation, by the end of 2019, UNRWA, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank had helped to create 37,000 temporary jobs in Gaza, with cash-for-work programmes specifically targeting women and young people.

## **B. Humanitarian and socioeconomic context**

### **Economic and fiscal developments**

18. Economic conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory were characterized by stagnant growth and rising unemployment. In 2019, gross domestic product (GDP) grew by 0.9 per cent (equal to the growth rate seen in 2018). The West Bank saw growth of only 1.2 per cent, while Gaza recorded no change.

19. The overall unemployment rate in the Occupied Palestinian Territory was 24 per cent in 2019 (13.7 per cent in the West Bank and 42.7 per cent in Gaza). Women's participation in the labour force remains among the lowest in the world, at below 20 per cent.

20. The Palestinian Authority continues to face severe political and fiscal constraints on its ability to address Palestinian development challenges. Since February 2019, Israel and the Palestinian Authority have been locked in a dispute over the withholding by Israel of clearance revenues owed to the Palestinian Authority. The dispute has created an unprecedented fiscal challenge for the Palestinian Authority, which adopted emergency measures to cope with the loss of 65 per cent of revenues (15 per cent of GDP). On 3 October, Israel and the Palestinian Authority reached a partial agreement on clearance revenues, which resulted in the transfer of \$425 million to the latter. That eased the Palestinian Authority's fiscal crisis, but the underlying dispute remains unresolved.

21. In March 2020, COVID-19 spread across Israel, the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the wider region. The ability of the Palestinian health system to cope with the spread of the disease is severely impaired. The situation is particularly dire in Gaza, where the health system is undermined by Israeli closures, continued divisions between Palestinian factions, chronic power cuts and acute shortages of specialized staff, drugs and equipment.

22. Beyond the public health implications of COVID-19, the negative shock to the Palestinian economy will have profound implications for public welfare, employment, social cohesion, financial and fiscal stability, and institutional survival. In the short term, the Palestinian economy will be negatively affected by restrictions on movement, the closures of workplaces and retail shops, and the zeroing out of key sectors such as tourism and hospitality. The financial sector is likely to come under severe stress from both domestic and international sources. The fiscal stability of the Palestinian Authority will also be endangered by reduced revenues and potentially reduced donor support.

### **Humanitarian developments**

23. A total of 113 Palestinians, including 21 children and 7 women, were killed in clashes with Israeli forces across the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Some 5,893 were



injured, including 2,192 children and 227 women, and a further 4,762 were treated for tear gas inhalation, including 2,029 children and 199 women. Those figures represent a decrease from the previous reporting period, when there were 299 deaths and 32,696 injuries. There were also 7 Israeli fatalities, including 2 women and 1 child, and a further 121 Israelis were injured, including 10 women and 5 children, compared with 14 Israeli fatalities and 137 injured in the previous reporting period.

24. Gaza continued to be a major flashpoint. A total of 15 Palestinians were killed and 4,445 were injured, with a further 1,856 treated for tear gas inhalation, during the “Great March of Return” protests near the perimeter fence. The fatalities included five children. A further 1,861 children were injured and 737 were treated for tear gas inhalation. The large scale of injuries from protests has overstretched the already limited health services in Gaza, which suffer from acute shortages of drugs, personnel, equipment and electricity. Over 1,200 Palestinians injured by live ammunition require limb reconstruction and some 150 have undergone amputations.

25. The demolition of Palestinian residential, livelihood and service infrastructure in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, continued during the reporting period. The Israeli authorities demolished, seized or forced owners to demolish at least 610 Palestinian-owned structures, including 140 donor-funded ones, throughout the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, displacing around 850 Palestinians, half of them children. That constitutes an increase from the previous reporting period, when 502 structures were demolished, including 65 donor-funded ones, and 593 Palestinians were displaced. During the reporting period, one Palestinian household of five was forcibly evicted after settlers took over their home in occupied East Jerusalem.

#### **Movement, humanitarian access and operational space**

26. Humanitarian operations in the West Bank continued to be hampered by the imposition by Israel of physical obstacles (such as the Barrier, checkpoints, roadblocks and gates) and administrative barriers (such as the building permit regime). Those restrictions affect access to East Jerusalem and other areas between the Barrier and the Green Line.

27. There were on average 17,464 exits per month from Gaza by permit holders through the Israeli-controlled Erez crossing point, a 39 per cent increase compared with 2018. The permit approval rate for applications from patients needing to pass through the crossing to obtain medical treatment increased to 64 per cent, from 61 per cent in the previous year.

28. Kerem Shalom remained the primary crossing for the movement of commodities to and from Gaza, with some imports also allowed via the border with Egypt. On average, 8,349 truckloads of goods entered Gaza per month during 2019, 7 per cent lower than the monthly average in 2018. An average of 269 trucks per month exited Gaza, mostly to West Bank markets.

29. The Rafah crossing has been open since May 2018. However, movement has been impaired because of daily limits on the number of passengers. A total of 77,520 individuals exited to Egypt and 73,728 entered Gaza from Egypt, an increase of 4.5 per cent and 59.4 per cent, respectively, compared with the previous reporting period.

30. At different points during the reporting period, Israel expanded the permissible fishing area along southern and central parts of Gaza to 15 nautical miles, while keeping the 6 mile limit in the north. Restrictions, including full naval closures, were frequently reinstated in response to rocket fire against Israel. As a result, there were marginal improvements in livelihoods related to the fishing industry.

31. Israeli-imposed restrictions affected humanitarian personnel in Gaza. Until October 2019, most national staff working for the United Nations and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were not permitted to exit Gaza for the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Following intensive advocacy efforts by the United Nations, international NGOs and Member States, the Israeli authorities eased that restriction in October 2019, allowing approximately 50 per cent of affected staff to access permits again. However, more than 160 staff of the United Nations and international NGOs are still not permitted to travel to the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

32. In March 2020, the Palestinian and Israeli authorities introduced measures to contain the COVID-19 outbreak, including progressively limiting movement into and within the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The Erez crossing point has been closed since 12 March, with limited emergency movement only. The King Hussein (Allenby) border crossing between the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Jordan has been closed since 19 March, briefly reopening for the return of some Palestinians from Jordan on 31 March. Entry from abroad through Israel is limited to Israeli citizens, residents, including Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem, and pre-approved international diplomatic personnel. The Kerem Shalom commercial crossing remains open and functional. The Rafah pedestrian crossing with Egypt has been mostly closed since 17 March, with exceptional openings for the return of Palestinians from abroad.

#### **Barrier**

33. The United Nations Register of Damage Caused by the Construction of the Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, established pursuant to General Assembly resolution [ES-10/17](#), continued its outreach and claim intake activities to “serve as a record, in documentary form, of the damage caused to all natural and legal persons concerned as a result of the construction of the wall by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem”. Since the establishment of the Register in 2007, more than 71,500 claims and over 1.5 million supporting documents have been collected in all nine governorates and in 267 of the 269 Palestinian communities affected by the wall.

### **III. United Nations response**

#### **A. Human and social development**

34. The United Nations continued to coordinate and deliver humanitarian and development assistance in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Some of that assistance targeted Palestinian individuals and communities in areas beyond the reach of the Palestinian Authority, including East Jerusalem and Area C, in the occupied West Bank, and Gaza. The United Nations focused its efforts on the most vulnerable segments of the population.

#### **Education**

35. UNRWA provided free primary education to 282,360 students in 276 elementary and preparatory schools in Gaza and to a further 45,681 students in 96 elementary and preparatory schools in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

36. In Gaza, UNRWA completed the reconstruction of five schools to better accommodate an expanding student body. UNRWA provided training on violence against children and on reporting and investigation processes for 241 staff members.

37. In the West Bank, 4 UNRWA schools were reconstructed and a further 25 were rehabilitated.

38. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) supported the integration of life skills teaching in schools. Following the training of 880 teachers, a total of 10,000 students were equipped with life skills to enhance their resilience.

39. UNICEF facilitated safe access to school for 6,856 children and teachers in the West Bank through protective accompaniment, particularly in Hebron. The UNICEF remedial education programme helped 5,411 students to overcome learning difficulties and catch up on missed education.

40. UNICEF raised awareness of early detection of developmental delays in children, which resulted in 375 preschool children in Gaza being screened for developmental delays and 17,394 children being screened for hearing difficulties.

41. UNDP supported improved access to education for 28,000 primary and secondary school students in East Jerusalem. Some 7,500 university students benefited from improved learning environments through the rehabilitation of Al-Quds University. In Gaza, around 630 undergraduate students benefited from the Al Fakhoura Scholarship and Empowerment Programme.

42. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) provided psychosocial support and training in life skills through sports programmes for 22 schools in Gaza and 16 schools in East Jerusalem.

43. In Gaza, the Mine Action Service provided training to over 17,000 persons at risk of being harmed by explosive remnants of war. The Mine Action Service continues to provide support regarding the explosive ordnance disposal requirements of all United Nations school facilities in Gaza.

## **Health**

44. In 2019, UNRWA provided over 4.2 million primary health-care patient consultations at its 22 health-care facilities in Gaza, and over 1.1 million consultations in the West Bank at its 43 health-care facilities. In addition, 27,092 Palestine refugees in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and a further 10,966 Palestine refugees in Gaza received assistance for secondary and tertiary health-care costs. UNRWA completed the reconstruction of one health centre in Gaza and one health centre in the West Bank.

45. The World Health Organization (WHO) continued to promote universal health coverage, including health financing, service delivery planning, primary health care, health-care quality and patient safety. WHO worked to strengthen the quality, use and management of hospital-based health information; assisted with the integration of a family practice approach in primary care; supported the validation and analysis of national health accounts, the measurement of financial risk protection and projections of health expenditures; worked to implement a national e-health strategy; and provided technical and material support to the East Jerusalem hospitals network.

46. WHO supported the implementation of a system-strengthening approach to reduce neonatal mortality. Ten maternity hospitals in Gaza received support for capacity-building and quality improvement.

47. WHO supported the Ministry of Health and UNRWA primary health-care facilities to implement and develop mental health emergency response plans.

48. UNICEF provided technical support to increase the capacity of health-care, education and social service providers in delivering quality health care, nutrition and

other services. Some 320 professionals and 40 community activators were trained. As a result, over 2,030 children benefited from early detection and intervention services.

49. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) strengthened capacities in the health-care sector, focusing on obstetric care protocols and training some 294 physicians, nurses and midwives. UNFPA worked to strengthen midwifery education and trained 225 students.

50. UNFPA supported youth-friendly health centres at universities in the West Bank and Gaza, providing services for some 20,000 young people.

51. Over 4,200 women were provided with breast cancer-related health-care services through UNFPA-supported interventions, while breast cancer awareness-raising activities reached 25,000 people.

52. The rehabilitation by UNDP of critical health-care units at Yatta and Jenin hospitals in the West Bank will benefit 45,000 patients annually.

53. In Gaza, the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) is supporting the installation of a 715 kilo-volt-ampere (kVA) solar power system at the European Gaza Hospital, enabling access to a sustainable source of electricity and reduced interruption of health-care services.

#### **Water and sanitation**

54. To increase access to safe drinking water in Gaza, UNICEF is supporting the expansion phase of the solar field at the Southern Gaza Seawater Desalination Plant, which will eventually benefit 250,000 people.

55. UNDP supported improved access to wastewater services for 457,000 people in Khan Younis and Rafah. UNDP also installed 14 small-scale desalination units at schools and universities, providing access to high-quality drinking water for 56,000 students in Gaza. Through these interventions, 8,500 people in the West Bank have increased access to municipal wastewater collection systems.

56. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) supported access to irrigation for 20,000 households in the West Bank and Gaza through groundwater wells, rainwater harvesting cisterns, water towers, reservoirs and irrigation wells.

57. UNOPS, in collaboration with UNRWA, is supporting the construction of wastewater collection and storm water drainage systems in Jericho to improve health and hygiene conditions.

58. The Mine Action Service provided risk assessments for water projects implemented by UNICEF, the Palestinian Water Authority and the Office of the Quartet. The risk assessments helped to clear 190,550 m<sup>2</sup> of land and benefited projects valued at \$255 million.

#### **Employment**

59. The UNDP cash-for-work programme helped to provide 3,624 short-term jobs, generating approximately 462,675 workdays.

60. FAO established a mechanism for supporting private investments in agribusiness by matching investment grants. FAO issued a first call for investment proposals and selected 114 eligible investments, which are receiving support totalling \$4.5 million.

61. FAO provided training to 200 women on post-harvest processing, sorting and packaging of dates to increase their employment opportunities in value-added sectors.

A total of 164 women secured employment after receiving the training. In addition, FAO provided 2,720 women with in-kind support and training to develop and expand their businesses.

62. The International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) continued to lead the review of the Palestinian Labour Law from a gender perspective. Draft amendments to seven articles of the Law were introduced, with the aim of closing the gender gap in the employment sector and ensuring decent work conditions for women and men.

63. ILO organized training activities for 72 labour inspectors on gender-responsive labour inspection.

64. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) launched a prisoner rehabilitation programme in cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Labour. In 2019, nine prisoners received diplomas in technical and vocational training.

### **Targeted social protection**

65. In Gaza, UNRWA distributed 395,740 food parcels to 21,516 Palestinian refugee households (98,935 individuals) classified as abject poor. Another 36,129 beneficiaries in the West Bank were assisted through cash-based transfers.

66. In 2019, 5,208 women and 501 men in the West Bank and Gaza accessed protection-related services supported by UN-Women. An additional 250 women who are survivors of gender-based violence accessed cash-for-work assistance and skills development in Gaza.

67. UNICEF supported the Ministry of Social Development in the revision of the National Social Development Sector Strategy 2017–2020 and in the midterm review of the strategy. A revised version of the strategy will cover the period 2020–2022.

68. In Gaza, UNICEF reached 10,278 children through family centres, with various targeted psychosocial support interventions.

69. In the West Bank, UNICEF, through local partners, provided 399 children with structured psychosocial support. In addition, 451 children under arrest were provided with legal aid services and 910 people benefited from legal awareness-raising sessions, including at schools.

70. Throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, UNICEF child protection services reached 45,622 children through 28 child protection partners. A total of 4,208 children also accessed individual case management support services. Structured psychosocial support services were provided to 72,010 caregivers. In the West Bank, child protection partners reached 10,921 people, and 1,191 children were provided with structured psychosocial activities.

71. The World Food Programme (WFP) continued to support the Palestinian Authority's social safety net programme, which provides 270,000 people in Gaza and the West Bank with cash-based transfers. WFP supported a further 75,000 people with in-kind food distributions.

### **Culture**

72. UNDP provided 20,000 workdays through the upgrade of the Maqam en-Nabi Musa cultural heritage site and other structural rehabilitation projects.

73. UNESCO rehabilitated eight cultural heritage sites and trained 13 professionals in cultural heritage preservation. The initiatives provided temporary job opportunities totalling 10,440 working days.

74. UNESCO supported institutional development through specialized capacity-building training sessions on obligations under cultural conventions ratified by the State of Palestine.

#### **Food security and agriculture**

75. FAO and WFP supported the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics to produce and analyse the 2018 Socio-Economic and Food Security Survey. FAO also provided technical support to the Ministry of Agriculture to formulate a national investment plan for food and nutrition security and sustainable agriculture.

76. In the West Bank, FAO assisted vulnerable Bedouin communities to protect their predominantly herding-based livelihoods. Movable animal shelters were provided to 2,172 Bedouin families. FAO also provided 4,000 Bedouin and herder households with drought-tolerant fodder seeds.

77. FAO increased the productivity of 5,080 small- and medium-scale farmers in agriculture cooperatives in the West Bank, through the provision of in-kind and technical support, including post-harvest technologies, agricultural tractors, planting and harvesting machines, drying facilities and agricultural nurseries.

#### **Human rights, women, children and youth**

78. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) continued supporting the national human rights institution and civil society organizations to build their capacities to engage with the treaty body mechanisms and strengthen their monitoring and follow-up of the implementation by the Government of the State of Palestine of its international human rights treaty obligations.

79. UNICEF, UN-Women and UNDP continued to strengthen the capacity of Palestinian institutions to provide child justice services. A total of 451 children under arrest benefited from legal aid services and 910 people benefited from legal awareness-raising sessions. Specific capacity-building programmes were developed, targeting 100 juvenile police officers, 35 child protection counsellors and 57 lawyers.

80. UNICEF, UN-Women and UNDP facilitated access to legal aid services for 17,615 people. Some 12,713 people benefited directly from awareness-raising activities aimed at increasing access to information related to women's rights and gender justice.

81. UN-Women helped to facilitate access to legal aid for 58 women inmates in the West Bank and 47 women inmates in Gaza. In addition, 93 women inmates in the West Bank and 50 women inmates in Gaza obtained psychosocial support.

82. UN-Women supported the Palestinian Bar Association in Gaza to develop its gender strategy. Furthermore, 25 women lawyers received training in order to improve the services provided and increase the representation of women in sharia courts. A total of 591 students (334 women and 257 men) attended civic education awareness-raising sessions. In addition, 25 women journalists received training in gender justice and women's access to justice.

83. UNICEF rehabilitation and therapeutic services reached 1,730 vulnerable and at-risk children and 850 parents in East Jerusalem.

84. UNICEF, in conjunction with OHCHR and the United Nations country team, prepared a confidential report on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The

Committee on the Rights of the Child made its recommendations to the State of Palestine after discussing the report with a delegation from the State of Palestine in Geneva in January 2020.

85. UNFPA developed 10 safe spaces for women, which provided services to over 5,000 survivors of gender-based violence. UNFPA supported efforts to increase capacities in the clinical management of rape, training 20 trainers within relevant institutions. Further enhancement of capacities in relation to gender-based violence were provided to 160 non-specialist staff.

86. UNFPA supported the establishment of family counselling clinics in all hospitals and directorates of health in the West Bank and Gaza. UNFPA worked to strengthen the capacity of health providers in the detection, treatment and referral of cases of gender-based violence. Over 70 gender-based violence focal points were trained to provide counselling.

87. UNOPS and UN-Women are supporting the rehabilitation of four shelters for women to ensure improved protection services at the shelters.

88. The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) undertook a survey to assess the safety and inclusivity of public spaces, with a focus on women and girls in the most disadvantaged communities. More than 200 students benefited from awareness-raising campaigns as a result of the assessment.

89. In 2019, UNODC delivered a forensic medicine training programme in sexual and gender-based violence for 155 health professionals and first responders. UNODC also delivered four awareness-raising workshops on criminal justice services for women survivors of violence.

90. In Gaza, the Mine Action Service implemented a community-based resilience training initiative focusing on women's empowerment, which reached 4,563 individuals, including 3,631 women.

91. In the West Bank, UNRWA provided counselling services to 433 survivors of gender-based violence and child abuse and to 90 survivors of elder neglect. Of those cases, 182 received health-care, relief and social services from UNRWA. An additional 102 cases were referred for external services. Furthermore, 71 emergency cases received immediate assistance and 1,918 individuals received group counselling.

92. In Gaza, UNRWA provided mental health and psychosocial support to vulnerable adults and children through its programmes. UNRWA referred 1,231 women in Gaza to legal counsellors to receive guidance. Awareness-raising sessions reached 2,475 beneficiaries, while community awareness and prevention activities relating to gender-based violence reached a further 1,587 Palestine refugees.

### **Environment, housing and urban development**

93. UNDP supported 168 vulnerable families in accessing adequate, safe and affordable housing in East Jerusalem. In Gaza, UNDP supported the upgrading of six sports fields and playgrounds.

94. UNOPS is supporting the construction of a wastewater treatment plant at the Jericho Agro-Industrial Park, which will reduce the load of industrial wastewater generated.

95. UN-Habitat delivered spatial planning support in partnership with over 20 local implementing partners, targeting over 1.5 million Palestinians in more than 200 communities across the West Bank. In East Jerusalem, UN-Habitat has completed the rehabilitation of seven residential units, in addition to a community courtyard.

96. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) delivered the full draft State of the Environment report to the Governments of Israel and the State of Palestine for their comments. UNEP also continued to support the Environment Quality Authority in the implementation of the Palestinian sustainable consumption and production national action plan.

## **B. United Nations system emergency assistance**

97. An estimated 2.4 million Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory need humanitarian assistance. Given donors' limited resources, humanitarian agencies continue to streamline and prioritize activities to target the maximum number of vulnerable people in a highly constrained context. To that end, humanitarian agencies had three priorities during the reporting period: protecting civilians; providing basic services and improved access to resources to enhance livelihoods; and supporting vulnerable Palestinians to cope with the protracted crisis. The inter-agency COVID-19 response plan for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, released in April, was designed to enable effective public health and multisector interventions, with a continued emphasis on supporting the most vulnerable people. It aims to support the efforts, led by the Government of the State of Palestine, to contain the disease and mitigate its impact.

### **Emergency agriculture support**

98. UNDP provided nine mobile veterinary clinics to deliver extension services to livestock breeders in the West Bank. UNDP also supported the rehabilitation of 152.5 dunums of land, benefiting 27 farmers in the West Bank.

99. FAO assisted 1,094 farmers and herders in Gaza to restore their irrigation levels and livestock and dairy production. FAO provided beneficiaries with solar energy units to operate poultry and dairy farms and irrigation ponds and wells.

100. FAO provided support to 6,965 herders to reduce the mortality rate of newborn animals, improve productivity and enhance the profitability of herding. FAO also delivered essential training to 1,200 herders on animal health management, biosafety and biosecurity.

### **Emergency food support**

101. UNRWA supported 1,036,385 beneficiaries through in-kind emergency food assistance. Of those, 604,193 Palestinians, including 11,970 female-headed households and 36,949 persons with disabilities, living below the abject poverty line received 79.8 per cent of their daily caloric needs, while 432,192 Palestinians, including 4,856 female-headed households and 5,799 persons with disabilities, living below the absolute poverty line received 42.95 per cent of their daily caloric needs.

102. UNRWA, in partnership with WFP, provided in-kind food assistance to more than 37,000 members of Bedouin communities. A further 25,578 food-insecure individuals in the West Bank received cash assistance from UNRWA.

103. In Gaza, UNICEF assessed a total of 10,602 young children for malnutrition and developmental delays, and 3,340 children were treated for malnutrition. Some 4,514 high-risk pregnant and lactating women benefited from 211 educational sessions, and 9,306 pregnant and lactating women benefited from individual counselling sessions on child health, nutrition and hygiene.



### **Emergency education support**

104. Nearly 10,000 children at risk of dropping out of school in Gaza benefited from the UNICEF-funded remedial education programme for improved literacy and numeracy.

105. UNICEF facilitated access to education for over 6,400 children and teachers by enabling them to travel to and from schools in Area C and the H2 area of Hebron.

106. UNICEF distributed 7,000 emergency education kits to vulnerable children in Gaza.

### **Emergency health support**

107. UNRWA provided medical assistance to 3,444 patients for demonstration-related injuries. Around 84 per cent of those injuries were from gunshots, of which two thirds were classified as moderate or severe. Of those treated in UNRWA health centres, 723 or 20 per cent were children under the age of 18, 79 per cent of whom were treated for gunshot injuries.

108. In Gaza, UNRWA school counsellors provided 123,251 students with life skills education. Counsellors also provided structured group interventions to 6,866 children. Moreover, 11,057 at-risk students were supported with individual counselling and 34,196 parents attended parent education sessions at school.

109. Mental health counsellors provided counselling to 6,407 adults in UNRWA health centres in Gaza. This was complemented by psychoeducation and group counselling sessions benefiting 2,583 adults. In addition, 17,570 Palestinians participated in psychosocial support sessions related to the impact of demonstrations and the general context in Gaza. Some 8,655 adults benefited from public awareness-raising sessions, while 5,486 adults received one-time individual consultations and advice concerning personal, family and social issues.

110. WHO supported the procurement and delivery of essential medical supplies and drugs to address critical shortages in the health sector. WHO worked closely with UNFPA and other partners to ensure the delivery of primary health care to Palestinians dependent on mobile health clinics in Area C and the H2 area of Hebron in the West Bank. In Gaza, WHO supported the provision of medical supplies for effective public health responses and preparedness.

111. UNICEF supported the upgrading of neonatal health-care services in hospitals in the West Bank, benefiting 540 children annually. UNICEF also supported the improvement of five neonatal health-care units in Gaza. Around 14,650 newborns in Gaza benefited from that support.

112. UNICEF provided maternal and neonatal care and nutrition-related services by facilitating postnatal home visits that reached 6,579 women and their newborns, including new mothers who had experienced high-risk pregnancies. UNICEF also supported the training of around 60 nurses and midwives in Gaza.

### **Emergency housing support**

113. UNOPS supported the import of construction materials to Gaza, including around 332,239 tons of cement in 2019. The materials were used for building or preparing for the rebuilding of homes for 7,317 families in Gaza.

114. UNOPS is implementing the second phase of the reconstruction of destroyed houses in Gaza, which has benefited 211 families so far.

115. Between the end of hostilities in August 2014 and February 2020, the assistance provided by UNRWA has allowed over 90,111 families to complete the repair of their homes, including the rebuilding of 4,694 destroyed homes.

116. UNRWA provided cash assistance to 65 displaced families following the demolition of their homes by the Israeli authorities. Furthermore, 409 Palestine refugee families received cash assistance and referrals to meet their humanitarian needs caused by search and arrest operations by Israeli security forces in Palestine refugee camps.

117. UNDP supported 1,572 internally displaced people to return to their homes following the reconstruction and repair of 280 totally damaged and 2 severely damaged housing units in Gaza.

#### **Emergency income generation**

118. As part of the package of urgent support for Gaza agreed upon by the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, UNDP and UNRWA helped to provide 3,624 people with short-term job opportunities through cash-for-work modalities, generating approximately 462,675 workdays, while UNRWA created a further 7,961 short-term job opportunities.

119. Overall in 2019, the United Nations created more than 30,000 temporary jobs in Gaza. UNRWA created 1,230,992 workdays, which translated into short-term job opportunities for 13,572 vulnerable individuals, benefiting a total of 78,500 workers and their family members and injecting \$16.8 million into the local economy. UNDP created 16,532 jobs

120. In 2019, UNRWA spent approximately \$20.2 million on construction projects and self-help shelter repair and reconstruction, generating 1,043 full-time job-equivalents in Gaza.

#### **Emergency water and sanitation support**

121. UNICEF and WFP supported vulnerable families in Gaza with hygiene kits and hygiene awareness-raising sessions. The programme provided 3,183 vulnerable families with water, sanitation and hygiene support.

122. UNRWA continued to provide basic water, sanitation and hygiene services in Palestine refugee camps in Gaza to prevent the outbreak of infectious diseases and other public health hazards.

123. In 2019, UNRWA provided solid waste management services in 8 Palestine refugee camps in Gaza (housing approximately 560,000 registered Palestine refugees) and 19 camps in the West Bank (housing more than 261,000 registered refugees).

### **C. United Nations system support to Palestinian institutions**

124. UNICEF and WHO supported the Ministry of Health to strengthen planning, costing and budgeting for immunization programmes.

125. UNICEF strengthened the Palestinian Water Authority's institutional mechanisms for overseeing works and programme management. UNICEF also supported the Palestinian Water Authority to increase accountability by strengthening the capacity and systems of national water, sanitation and hygiene authorities.

126. UNDP strengthened the capacity of the Ministry of Health by training more than 2,000 health personnel in health-care waste separation and management within health-care facilities.

127. UNDP supported the Ministry of Agriculture to enable the efficient production of higher value crops and to strengthen agricultural-based livelihoods. Around 200 staff and 40 researchers from the Ministry of Agriculture benefited from that intervention.

128. WHO continued to strengthen core capacities for the International Health Regulations in order to enhance the detection and assessment of and response to public health events, in conjunction with the national emergency preparedness plan.

129. WFP provided support to the Ministry of Social Development to improve its statistical analysis and targeting of food-insecure people and assist with the creation of a unified social welfare data portal. WFP, ILO and UNICEF are supporting the Ministry of Social Development in strengthening the capacity of national systems for persons with disabilities and elderly people.

130. FAO supported the regulatory framework and capacity development of the Government of the State of Palestine in the area of sanitary and phytosanitary capacity, quality control and food safety.

131. FAO supported two food safety laboratories in Gaza to acquire ISO 17025 accreditation.

132. UNOPS continued to provide technical assistance to the High Judicial Council to strengthen its capacities for strategic planning and operational management of facilities.

133. UNOPS renovated two vehicle maintenance facilities for the security forces of the Palestinian Authority.

134. OHCHR supported the Government of the State of Palestine with drafting its State party reports under the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and helped it to prepare for constructive dialogues with the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Committee on the Rights of the Child. Furthermore, OHCHR conducted a broad range of capacity-building activities to increase awareness and knowledge of human rights standards within the institutions of the security and justice sectors and to strengthen their ability to mainstream human rights into national plans, policies and legislation. Notably, OHCHR helped the Government of the State of Palestine to set up a national preventive mechanism under the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture.

135. UNODC supported the forensic science laboratory of the Palestinian Civil Police. UNODC helped to establish a new biological screening services section within the laboratory, for the examination of biological evidence of sexual and gender-based violence, and provided training in that regard.

136. In 2020, UNODC provided further technical assistance to the national programme on drug control, crime prevention and criminal justice, in the revision of a draft law to combat human trafficking in the State of Palestine.

137. UNFPA procured life-saving supplies and essential medications to meet the needs of 20,000 pregnant women in Gaza. Some 37 health-care workers received training on the Minimum Initial Service Package for Reproductive Health and its application in emergencies and in cases of gender-based violence. A further 50 workers were trained on safe delivery in emergencies, and some 25 health institutions were given training in how to implement the Minimum Initial Service Package.

138. UN-Women facilitated training for 239 key justice and security actors on gender mainstreaming, the provision of responsive services for women victims of violence,

the existing national referral system for such victims and responsive adjudication of cases of violence against women.

139. In 2019, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) continued to provide recurrent advisory services to the Forecasting Unit of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, which uses the UNCTAD macroeconomic model of the Palestinian economy and is run by professional staff trained and continuously advised by UNCTAD.

140. The Mine Action Service supported the Palestine Mine Action Center by providing risk education workshops, which have helped the Center to formulate a risk education strategy that will benefit 500,000 individuals in the West Bank. The Mine Action Service has continued to provide technical guidance and advice to the Center to support it in meeting its obligations under the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction.

#### **D. Private sector development**

141. In 2019, UNRWA provided 2,922 microfinance loans worth \$3.07 million to Palestine refugees in Gaza and conducted training for 1,831 participants. In the West Bank, UNRWA delivered 10,161 loans, valued at \$14.5 million.

142. ILO provided young people with financial and non-financial support to start sustainable small enterprises and create decent job opportunities. ILO provided support for the legal and institutional establishment of the Cooperative Work Agency, to help it to fulfil its mandate in serving the cooperative sector as a regulatory administrative body and a centre of promotional services.

143. UN-Women provided technical assistance to the financial sector, in particular the banking sector, with the aim of mainstreaming gender in the workplace and improving women's access to upper-level management positions.

144. UNDP supported the efforts of the Palestinian Industrial Estates and Free Zones Authority to increase the competitiveness of Palestinian products through the provision of clean, reliable and affordable energy.

#### **E. Coordination of United Nations assistance**

145. Collaboration and coordination between donors and United Nations entities continued under the auspices of the Deputy Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, United Nations Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The humanitarian country team met regularly to agree on humanitarian advocacy and response measures. The United Nations country team continued to coordinate its development programming with the priorities outlined in the Palestinian National Policy Agenda for 2017–2022.

### **IV. Donor response to the crisis**

#### **Budgetary and fiscal support**

146. The Palestinian Authority continued to face severe fiscal constraints on its ability to address humanitarian and development needs. Since February 2019, Israel and the Palestinian Authority have been locked in a dispute over the withholding by Israel of clearance revenues owed to the Palestinian Authority. That situation has created an unprecedented fiscal challenge for the Palestinian Authority, which

adopted emergency measures to cope with the loss of 65 per cent of its revenues, equal to some 15 per cent of GDP. To finance the deficit, the Palestinian Authority relied on donor support and financing from national banks.

147. Donor support to the Occupied Palestinian Territory remained at near historic lows, owing to a decision by the United States to cease funding UNRWA and to divert a significant portion of the programme budget of the United States Agency for International Development elsewhere.

#### **Donor coordination**

148. The local aid coordination structure was further reformed and brought under the Office of the Prime Minister. The structure continued to function as the main forum for Government-led coordination of donor-funded development interventions in 15 sectors.

149. The Ad Hoc Liaison Committee held two meetings, in April and in September 2019, and maintained its strong support for the implementation of the package of urgent humanitarian and economic interventions agreed upon in September 2018. The interventions enabled significant improvements in 2019 in the fields of energy, health, water and sanitation, and job creation. They helped to provide space for political efforts by Egypt, the United Nations and others to prevent renewed conflict and support Palestinian reconciliation. They also provided the impetus for larger scale development projects. More than 37,000 jobs were created by the United Nations and the World Bank during 2019. Qatar-funded fuel supplies for the power plant in Gaza doubled the electricity supply to Gaza. Important progress was also made on the construction of critical water and sanitation facilities and imports of equipment for the health-care sector.

## **V. Unmet needs**

150. Under the 2020 Humanitarian Response Plan for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, \$348 million is sought to fund assistance and protection for the 1.5 million Palestinians most in need of protection, access to essential services and interventions in view of the occupation and repeated shocks. For 2019, 73 per cent of the funding for the Humanitarian Response Plan was secured.

151. Severe financial challenges continued to constrain UNRWA operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Efforts to stabilize emergency operations were only possible through a loan and grant from the Central Emergency Response Fund and additional contributions and advances from donors, as well as advances from the UNRWA programme budget. Despite a significantly lower request for emergency funding, only \$81 million (58.6 per cent of the amount sought) was provided for the 2019 UNRWA emergency appeal for the Occupied Palestinian Territory. In January 2020, UNRWA launched its 2020 budget appeal, calling for a minimum of \$1.4 billion to fund the Agency's essential services and assistance, including life-saving humanitarian aid, for 5.6 million registered Palestine refugees.

## **VI. Challenges**

152. The continued absence of a political process to end the occupation and achieve a viable two-State solution continues to be the largest impediment to Palestinian development. Continued Israeli settlement expansion, demolitions, closures, access and movement restrictions, and other aspects of the protracted military occupation continue to have a severe impact on the humanitarian, social and political life of

Palestinians and their ability to exercise their fundamental human rights. Violence and incitement continue to perpetuate mutual fear and suspicion. The political division between the West Bank and Gaza places severe obstacles to addressing humanitarian needs and restoring a political horizon. Decreasing funding to the State of Palestine, and to the United Nations, poses a further challenge to the provision of development and humanitarian assistance.

153. In the final weeks of the reporting period, the COVID-19 outbreak escalated in Israel, the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the wider region. The pandemic is likely to have far-reaching humanitarian and development consequences, and an unprecedented resource gap will almost certainly emerge.

## VII. Conclusions

154. The operational context for the work of the United Nations during the reporting period was increasingly difficult because of the challenges outlined in the present report. The United Nations will continue to work towards the realization of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions, including resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#), [338 \(1973\)](#), [1397 \(2002\)](#), [1515 \(2003\)](#), [1850 \(2008\)](#), [1860 \(2009\)](#) and [2334 \(2016\)](#), an end to the occupation that began in 1967 and the establishment of a sovereign, democratic, viable and contiguous Palestinian State, existing side by side in peace with a secure Israel. It is only by realizing the vision of two States living side by side in peace, security and mutual recognition, with Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and the State of Palestine, and all final status issues resolved permanently through negotiations, that the legitimate aspirations of both peoples will be achieved.

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**Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and  
disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including  
special economic assistance**

**Economic and Social Council  
2021 session  
23 July 2020–22 July 2021  
Agenda item 14  
Implementation of the Declaration on the  
Granting of Independence to Colonial  
Countries and Peoples by the specialized  
agencies and the international institutions  
associated with the United Nations**

## Assistance to the Palestinian people

### Report of the Secretary-General

#### *Summary*

The present report, submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution [75/126](#), contains an assessment of the assistance received by the Palestinian people and proposals for responding to unmet needs. It provides a description of the efforts made by the United Nations, in cooperation with the Government of Palestine, donors and civil society, to support Palestinian people and institutions.

The reporting period (1 April 2020–31 March 2021) was characterized by continued tensions and violence and the persistence of negative trends, further impeding the resumption of meaningful negotiations and affecting prospects for peace. The fiscal performance of the Palestinian Authority was adversely affected by a combination of factors, including the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and a decline in overseas development assistance, leaving needs unmet to a significant degree. The dire situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory was further compounded by a significant deterioration in the relationship between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, and the decision by the Palestinian Authority to suspend coordination with Israel in response to the statement by Israel that it intended to annex territory in the occupied West Bank.

During the reporting period, the United Nations continued to coordinate and deliver humanitarian and development assistance to the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Despite the challenges, the United Nations system raised a total of \$295.1 million for the 2020 Humanitarian Response Plan for the Occupied Palestinian Territory and, overall, \$380.7 million in humanitarian assistance were delivered to the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Some of that assistance was targeted at Palestinian

\* [A/76/50](#).



individuals and communities in areas beyond the reach of the Palestinian Authority, including East Jerusalem and Area C, in the occupied West Bank, and Gaza.

Under the 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, \$417 million is sought to provide basic food, protection, health care, shelter, water and sanitation to 1.8 million Palestinians who have been identified as those most in need of humanitarian interventions across the Occupied Palestinian Territory.



## I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 75/126, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it, at its seventy-sixth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution, containing an assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people, an assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them. The reporting period is from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

2. Information on the political and socioeconomic situation of the Occupied Palestinian Territory is provided in several periodic reports prepared by United Nations entities and submitted to various United Nations bodies, including the monthly Security Council briefings by the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process; the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan; the annual report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA); and the biannual reports of the Office of the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians.

3. The humanitarian, economic and development needs of the Palestinian people are reflected in several complementary strategic and resource mobilization documents. Under the 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, \$417 million is sought to provide basic food, protection, health care, shelter, water and sanitation to 1.8 million Palestinians who have been identified as those most in need of support and who can be reached under the operating conditions prevailing across the Occupied Palestinian Territory. That is significantly more than the \$350 million sought in 2019 but slightly below the \$426 million sought in 2020, which was a combination of the original request of \$348 million under the Humanitarian Response Plan and \$78 million requested in subsequent appeals related to COVID-19. The elevated amount reflects the severity of the health and economic crisis facing the Occupied Palestinian Territory. For the 2020 Humanitarian Response Plan, the United Nations system raised a total of \$295.1 million. Overall, \$380.7 million were delivered in humanitarian assistance to the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

4. In the reporting period, the global pandemic continued to exacerbate existing humanitarian needs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and reverse development gains, with far-reaching socioeconomic consequences.

5. The inter-agency COVID-19 response plan for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, released in April 2020 with two additional updates, called for \$78 million to respond to the public health needs and immediate humanitarian consequences of the pandemic. During the reporting period, the humanitarian country team, led by the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, commenced implementation of the plan, in support of the Government's efforts to prevent further transmission of the disease, provide adequate care for patients and their families, and mitigate the worst effects of the pandemic.

6. With regard to development, the United Nations country team published its COVID-19 development system response plan in July 2020. The country team immediately began implementation of \$140 million in COVID-19 development response programming, to be delivered over the subsequent 12 to 18 months.

Approximately two thirds of that amount was funded using existing or reprogrammed resources. In addition to the \$140 million in direct programming, the country team identified \$45 million in “scalable” support programmes for affected households and small and medium-sized enterprises, comprising a portfolio of cash-for-work programmes, cash transfer programmes, microfinance and revolving loan support, and direct support to smallholder agricultural producers.

7. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework for 2018–2022 contains the collective vision and response of the United Nations to the national development plan of the Government of Palestine contained in the Palestinian National Policy Agenda for the period 2017–2022. The Framework places the Palestinian people at the centre of development programming, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and requires financial resources of approximately \$1.26 billion over five years.

8. Throughout the reporting period, the Office of the Special Coordinator continued its efforts to support conflict prevention and a return to peace negotiations, and to promote coordination among the Government of Palestine, the United Nations, the international community and the Government of Israel.

## **II. Overview of the current situation**

### **A. Political context**

9. The reporting period was marked by a significantly deteriorated socioeconomic situation due, in large part, to the impact of the pandemic. The period was also characterized by the continued military occupation by Israel of Palestinian territory and the absence of a political process to resolve the conflict and end illegal settlement activity in the occupied West Bank and demolitions of Palestinian structures; the dire humanitarian situation in Gaza in connection with Israeli closures; and other unilateral actions that undermine peace efforts.

10. Since the outbreak of the pandemic in March 2020, altogether 270,878 cases have been diagnosed in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, leading to 2,881 deaths. In Israel, there were 832,350 cases and 6,186 deaths. The Palestinian and Israeli authorities imposed prolonged lockdowns and strict movement restrictions to control the spread of the virus. All sides worked closely with the United Nations and its partners to ensure that equipment and supplies, and, more recently, COVID-19 vaccines, were delivered to the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza.

11. In May 2020, in response to the statement by Israel that it intended to annex parts of the occupied West Bank, the Palestinian Authority announced that coordination with Israeli authorities had been terminated and that it would not receive the clearance funds that Israel collects on its behalf under the Oslo agreements. Those clearance funds amount to 65 to 75 per cent of the total revenues of the Palestinian Authority. The Palestinian Authority restored coordination and the transfer of clearance revenues on 17 November, after Israel suspended its annexation plans.

12. The Secretary-General welcomed the agreement between Israel, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain, under which Israeli annexation plans for parts of the occupied West Bank were suspended, and expressed the hope that it would create an opportunity for Israeli and Palestinian leaders to re-engage in meaningful negotiations that would realize a two-State solution in line with relevant United Nations resolutions, international law and bilateral agreements. Israel later also signed agreements with Morocco and the Sudan under which relations were normalized.

13. In Gaza, the relative calm between Palestinian militants and Israel was maintained. Nonetheless, in August, Palestinian militants resumed their launching of incendiary balloons from Gaza towards Israel, sometimes escalating to launching rockets and mortars. Israel retaliated by striking targets in Gaza and temporarily tightening the closures until, at the end of the month, a temporary de-escalation was achieved. The United Nations continued to lead diplomatic efforts to prevent a violent escalation, in close coordination with Egypt. These efforts were supported with generous assistance from Qatar, which allowed for a continuous supply of fuel for the Gaza power plant, the sponsoring of projects and financial assistance.

14. There was progress during the reporting period towards holding long-delayed Palestinian elections. Between September and November, Fatah and Hamas held bilateral discussions in Istanbul, Turkey, and subsequently in Cairo. On 15 January 2021, the President of the State of Palestine, Mahmoud Abbas, issued a decree by which he ordered legislative and presidential elections and elections for the Palestinian National Council to be held in 2021 and beginning with legislative elections on 22 May. The Secretary-General welcomed the decree, calling it a “crucial step towards Palestinian unity, giving renewed legitimacy to national institutions, including a democratically elected Parliament and Government in Palestine.” On 17 February, when the Central Elections Commission closed voter registration, a total of 2.6 million voters had registered, 93 per cent of all those eligible to vote. Approximately 40 per cent of registered voters are under the age of 30.

15. Illegal settlement activities continued throughout the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem. The Israeli authorities advanced plans for 6,800 housing units in settlements, 600 of which were to be located in East Jerusalem. That was about half of the number for which plans were advanced during the previous reporting period (13,700 units, of which 1,300 in East Jerusalem). Tenders were announced for 2,100 units, compared with 2,400 during the previous reporting period. One reason for the decrease was an eight-month hiatus in the advancement of new plans that lasted from February to October 2020 in the context of Israeli plans to annex parts of the West Bank. During that period, the publication of a tender for 1,200 settlement housing units in the strategic location of Giv’at Hamatos was put on hold but ultimately opened for bidding on 15 November; the winning bids were announced on 20 January 2021. Overall, about 60 per cent of the units for which plans were advanced or approved or for which tenders were announced during the reporting period are to be built in outlying locations, deep inside the occupied West Bank. The rate of settlement construction in Area C declined from an average of 132 construction starts per month during the previous reporting period to 75 between April and December 2020.

16. On 25 September 2020, at the general debate of the General Assembly, President Abbas called for an international conference to restart the peace process with the goal of reaching a two-State solution. Throughout the reporting period, the United Nations and its regional and international partners continued to urge Israelis and Palestinians to take concrete actions to restore a legitimate political horizon to end the conflict. The envoys of the Middle East Quartet met several times to discuss the situation on the ground and the latest political developments, as well as to chart a way forward.

## **B. Humanitarian and socioeconomic context**

### **Economic and fiscal developments**

17. Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic and the suspension of coordination between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, economic conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory sharply deteriorated in 2020. The economic contraction affected both the West Bank and Gaza.

18. The overall unemployment rate in the Occupied Palestinian Territory was 25.9 per cent in 2020 (15.7 per cent in the West Bank and 46.6 per cent in Gaza), compared with 24 per cent in 2019 (13.7 per cent in the West Bank; 42.7 per cent in Gaza). The participation of women in the labour force remains among the lowest in the world, at below 20 per cent.

19. Prior to the pandemic, approximately 110,000 Palestinians legally commuted to work in Israel and the wages of Palestinian workers in Israel and the settlements accounted for approximately one third of all consumer demand in the West Bank, a significant driver of the Palestinian economy. While large parts of the Israeli economy were shut down for significant stretches of 2020 owing to the pandemic, Palestinian workers commuting into Israel faced both lower demand for their labour and unpredictable public health restrictions on their movements. During the first lockdown, in the spring of 2020, around 150,000 Palestinians lost their jobs, of whom 41,000 had been employed in Israel and the settlements. However, throughout the period, Israel put in place protocols such as granting extended work permits to allow more than 40,000 workers from the West Bank to commute to their jobs. In addition, on 4 May 2020, Israel approved new regulations and enforcement guidelines imposing the obligation on employers in Israel to provide medical insurance and appropriate accommodation for those Palestinian workers during their stay. In March 2021, Israel launched a vaccination campaign for Palestinian workers in Israel.

20. The ability of the Palestinian Authority to address Palestinian development challenges was greatly constrained by several factors including the impact of the pandemic and a deterioration in its relations with Israel. The temporary suspension of coordination, together with unresolved issues related to the withholding by Israel of clearance revenues in response to payments made by the Palestinian Authority to security prisoners, created an unprecedented fiscal challenge. The Palestinian Authority adopted emergency austerity measures to cope with the loss of a majority of its revenues. Owing to the pandemic and the collapse of coordination, the Palestinian economy contracted around 10 to 12 per cent in 2020 – one of the largest annual contractions since the Palestinian Authority had been established in 1994.

### **Humanitarian developments**

21. The suspension of coordination, which lasted until 18 November 2020, caused additional challenges to the public health and humanitarian responses to the pandemic. The United Nations temporarily assumed responsibilities for processing deliveries of humanitarian aid and related equipment and for facilitating the exit of patients from the Gaza Strip, actions that would ordinarily have been coordinated bilaterally between Israeli and Palestinian authorities.

22. By the end of 2020, about 2 million Palestinians were estimated to suffer from severe or moderate food insecurity, 1.4 million in Gaza and 600,000 in the West Bank. Those numbers represent an increase of about 300,000 people compared with 2019. The COVID-19-related restrictions have further undermined access to social services across the Occupied Palestinian Territory, with greater impact on the most vulnerable including the elderly, persons with disabilities, cancer patients in Gaza, Bedouin communities in Area C, households isolated by the separation wall and undocumented residents of East Jerusalem. Mental health service providers have reported a surge in cases of gender-based violence affecting women and children.

23. In the reporting period, 19 Palestinians, including six children, were killed by Israeli forces (including 11 perpetrators or alleged perpetrators of attacks against Israelis). A total of 1,662 Palestinians were injured, among them women and children, of whom 171 were injured by live ammunition, 373 by rubber bullets and 937 by tear gas inhalation requiring medical treatment. Those figures represent a decrease from

the previous reporting period that was attributed to the halt in the Great March of Return demonstrations at the Gaza-Israel perimeter fence since December 2019 and to a decrease in the number of escalations between Israel and armed groups in Gaza. In the West Bank, on at least 374 occasions, assailants believed or known to be Israeli settlers either injured Palestinians (136 injuries in 88 incidents) or damaged or stole their property (286 incidents), slightly more than the numbers recorded in 2019, but significantly more than in previous years. There were also 3 Israeli fatalities in the reporting period, 1 soldier and 2 civilians; 104 Israelis were injured, including 8 women and 9 children.

24. The demolition of Palestinian residential, livelihood and service infrastructure in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, continued during the reporting period. Israeli authorities demolished, seized or forced the demolition of 1,004 Palestinian structures across the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, citing the absence of building permits issued by Israel, which are almost impossible for Palestinians to obtain. The number is 72 per cent higher than in the previous reporting period.

### **Movement, humanitarian access and operational space**

25. Humanitarian operations in the West Bank continued to be hampered by the imposition by Israel of physical obstacles (such as the barrier, checkpoints, roadblocks and gates) and administrative barriers (such as the permit regime). These restrictions affect access to East Jerusalem and other areas between the barrier and the Green Line.

26. Severe restrictions were imposed on the movement of people in the context of the pandemic. Those were compounded by locally imposed lockdowns, the suspension of coordination and the internal political divide. In the reporting period, there were an average of 900 exits per month from Gaza by permit holders through the Erez crossing point controlled by Israel, 95 per cent fewer than in the previous reporting period and the lowest since 2012.

27. Kerem Shalom remained the primary crossing for the movement of commodities to and from Gaza. On average, 8,841 truckloads of goods entered Gaza per month during the reporting period, slightly more than in the previous reporting period. An average of 291 trucks per month exited Gaza, mostly to West Bank markets.

28. The Rafah crossing was closed during most of 2020. About 25,400 exits were recorded there throughout the reporting period, down from 77,520 in the previous reporting period. From 9 February 2021 until the end of the reporting period, the crossing was open five days a week.

29. The fishing zone off the coast of Gaza largely remained at 15 nautical miles in the south and 6 in the north, but was occasionally expanded and restricted, and sometimes completely closed, during 2020. These and other restrictions were imposed by Israel in response to violence carried out by armed groups or individuals in Gaza.

### **Barrier**

30. Palestinian farmers continued to face difficulties in obtaining Israeli authorization to access their land in restricted areas behind the barrier in the seam zone, compounded by the suspension of coordination between the Palestinian Authority and Israeli authorities. The approval rate for permit applications by landowners to access their land in the seam zone fell from 71 per cent of applications in 2014 to 37 per cent in 2019. During the 2020 olive harvest, 69 gates and 4 checkpoints were designated for agricultural access, compared with 73 and 5, respectively, in 2019.

### III. United Nations response

#### A. Human and social development

31. The United Nations continued to coordinate and deliver humanitarian and development assistance in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Some of that assistance was targeted at Palestinian individuals and communities in areas beyond the reach of the Palestinian Authority, including East Jerusalem and Area C, in the occupied West Bank, and Gaza. The United Nations focused its efforts on the most vulnerable segments of the population.

##### Education

32. UNRWA provided free primary education to 286,645 students in 278 elementary and preparatory schools in Gaza and to a further 45,883 students in 96 elementary and preparatory schools in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

33. The pandemic has severely disrupted education. UNRWA schools were closed in Gaza and the West Bank from March until the end of the 2019/20 school year, in line with the decision of the Palestinian Authority. During the 2020/21 school year, temporary closures continued in schools with high numbers of COVID-19 cases.

34. Ten UNRWA schools were upgraded in Gaza, a further 10 UNRWA schools were rehabilitated and 1 was reconstructed in the West Bank.

35. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) worked with the Ministry of Education to support around 50,000 education staff in 2,259 schools in operationalizing and implementing the COVID-19 prevention and control in school protocol. Furthermore, 1,670 schools were provided with essential hygiene and cleaning materials, an effort that reached nearly 62,250 students.

36. In partnership with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Empowerment, the private sector and academia, UNICEF supported 10 teams of young people in designing solutions to improve education and civic engagement through initiatives under the Generation Unlimited youth challenge.

37. UNICEF continued its partnership with local partners and supported 1,585 adolescents in acquiring entrepreneurial and civic engagement skills.

38. UNDP supported improved access to education for 21,308 students at 55 schools in marginalized communities in East Jerusalem and the West Bank. Some 10,000 university students benefited from improved learning environments because of the rehabilitation of Al-Quds University. In Gaza, solar systems were installed in three public schools for girls, which benefited approximately 3,008 students. Also in Gaza, 389 undergraduate students benefited from the Al Fakhoora scholarship and empowerment programme.

39. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) supported the upgrade of the Ministry of Education website and its e-learning platform to enable greater interaction with the community and students.

40. UNESCO, the Ministry of Education and partners finalized a manual on the training of inclusive education trainers and started the training of supervisors and counsellors, which will be scaled up to around 3,000 teachers.

41. In Gaza, the Mine Action Service provided training to over 15,000 persons at risk of being harmed by explosive remnants of war. The Mine Action Service continues to provide support regarding the explosive ordnance disposal requirements of all United Nations school facilities in Gaza.

### **Health**

42. The World Health Organization (WHO) continued to promote universal health coverage and the right to health through the strengthening of the health-care system, the monitoring of barriers to health-care access and attacks against health-care facilities, and advocacy to address policies and practices affecting the health rights of Palestinians. WHO continued its work to enhance information systems, build capacities through the implementation of a regional framework for action and undertook assessments of the management and performance of the primary health-care system.

43. WHO supported the implementation of a system-strengthening approach to reduce neonatal mortality. Early essential newborn care has been put in place in five government hospitals and four non-governmental maternity hospitals in Gaza. WHO worked with the Ministry of Health to develop and implement standard operating procedures for the prevention and control of infections for pregnant women and newborns.

44. During the suspension of the coordination between the Palestinian Authority and Israeli authorities, WHO established a temporary mechanism for patient and companion permit applications through which over 1,400 patient applications were submitted and over 1,600 companion applications.

45. UNRWA conducted approximately 2.7 million face-to-face primary health-care patient consultations at its 22 health-care facilities in Gaza and over 756,000 consultations in the West Bank at its 43 health-care facilities. The number of face-to-face consultations declined steeply compared with the previous reporting period because of the pandemic.

46. In addition, 23,067 Palestine refugees in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and a further 13,924 Palestine refugees in Gaza received assistance for secondary and tertiary health-care costs. UNRWA continued to prioritize care for the 98,373 patients in Gaza and 42,177 patients in the West Bank diagnosed with non-communicable disease. Services were adapted to protect those at high risk of contracting COVID-19 by introducing home delivery of medicines and launching a mobile application with regard to non-communicable diseases.

47. UNICEF conducted a mapping study of the maternal, neonatal and child health-care services in Gaza, targeting 41 governmental facilities.

48. UNICEF supported the Ministry of Health in updating the national neonate health-care protocols, which included the early identification of developmental delays and disabilities in children, and the principles of the baby-friendly hospital initiative. UNICEF ensured the uninterrupted procurement of vaccines and sustained the continued vaccination of children. With WHO, UNICEF supported the Ministry of Health by developing the comprehensive multi-year immunization plan for the period 2020–2024.

49. UNFPA provided capacity development for some 595 health-care providers on essential sexual and reproductive health services. Over 10,000 women were provided with sexual and reproductive health services, including breast cancer screening, while awareness-raising activities on sexual and reproductive health reached 100,000 people.

50. Through the upgrading of the chemotherapy department at the Augusta Victoria Hospital in East Jerusalem, UNDP has provided access to health-care services for about 3,200 cancer patients per year.

51. In Gaza, UNDP installed two microwave systems for medical waste treatment and 15 autoclaves, provided medical waste transport vehicles and trained over 6,110 health-care workers.

52. Also in Gaza, the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) supported the installation of a 715-kilovolt-ampere (kVA) solar power system at the European Hospital in Gaza, thus contributing a sustainable source of electricity and reducing the amount of interruptions of health-care services.

### **Water and sanitation**

53. In 2020, UNICEF reached 320,650 children and their families; they benefited from having safe drinking water and sanitation services and from the promotion of safe hygiene. The sanitation works in Gaza were completed, which provided 70,000 people with safe sanitation facilities.

54. Together with the Palestinian Water Authority, UNICEF completed the rehabilitation and construction of water networks in the southern part of the West Bank, providing approximately 5,000 people in vulnerable communities with safe drinking water. Also in the southern West Bank, UNICEF provided water for 1,045 children and their caregivers in coordination with local municipalities.

55. UNDP handed over the Khan Younis waste water treatment plant to the Coastal Municipalities Water Utility. The plant, constructed by UNDP, has a capacity of 26,600 cubic metres per day and directly serves 217,000 residents of Khan Younis. UNDP is installing a 7-megawatt-peak solar energy system that will ensure a constant supply of electricity.

56. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) supported access to irrigation for 3,000 households in the West Bank and Gaza through the rehabilitation and construction of groundwater wells, rainwater harvesting cisterns, water towers, reservoirs and irrigation wells.

57. UNOPS, in collaboration with UNRWA, is supporting the construction of wastewater collection and storm water drainage systems in Ein el-Sultan refugee camp near Jericho to improve health and hygiene conditions.

58. The Mine Action Service conducted explosive remnants of war risk assessments for water projects implemented by UNICEF and the Office of the Quartet, which helped to clear 15,580 m<sup>2</sup> of land and benefited vital infrastructure projects.

### **Employment**

59. The UNDP cash-for-work programme in Gaza generated 2,883 short-term jobs totalling approximately 308,409 workdays.

60. UNDP provided financial and technical support to 106 micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and Gaza.

61. FAO established a mechanism for supporting private investments in agribusiness by matching investment grants. In the first phase of the initiative in 2020, altogether 105 investments were selected to receive a total of \$4.1 million.

62. FAO provided entrepreneurship training to 400 young Palestinians at four universities to promote the uptake of green jobs among young people and the creation of green enterprises by them.



63. The International Labour Organization (ILO) continued to work on the review of the Palestinian Labour Law. As a result, 16 new amendments and 19 new recommendations have been proposed.

64. ILO trained 163 government officials and staff on occupational safety, and health-related and gender-responsive labour inspection practices.

#### **Targeted social protection**

65. In Gaza, UNRWA distributed quarterly food parcels to 98,935 individuals classified as living in abject poverty. Another 36,129 beneficiaries in the West Bank received assistance in the form of cash-based transfers.

66. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) refurbished and rehabilitated four operating shelters for women in the West Bank and Gaza, and standard operating procedures were developed. During the pandemic, awareness-raising activities were conducted on gender-based violence services.

67. The World Food Programme (WFP) continued to support the social safety net programme of the Palestinian Authority by ensuring cash-based transfers and in-kind food distribution for around 350,000 people, and injecting approximately \$4 million into the local economy. In response to the pandemic, WFP scaled up food assistance to support an additional 84,000 people.

68. WFP extended its cash-based transfer assistance to 265 families by targeting vulnerable pregnant and lactating women, and children under five years, in the H2 zone of Hebron, which enabled them to buy food rich in vitamins and minerals.

69. With the Ministry of Social Development, UNICEF launched a social protection response to COVID-19 to support 687 newly impoverished households.

#### **Culture**

70. UNESCO rehabilitated five cultural heritage sites and continued the renovation of the Riwaya Museum in Bethlehem. The initiatives created temporary job opportunities totalling 4,000 workdays.

71. UNESCO supported the Ministry of Culture in promoting the resilience of Palestinian artists and the cultural industry by organizing a series of debates focused on young people and emerging technologies, the status of women in culture and the prospects for the independent cultural scene in the State of Palestine.

72. UNDP rehabilitated two historical sites, in Qalandiya and Kafr Aqab, respectively, as part of the employment generation programme. In addition, it rehabilitated 40 shops in the H2 zone of Hebron.

#### **Food security and agriculture**

73. FAO increased the productivity of 1,213 small- and medium-scale farmers in agriculture cooperatives in the West Bank with in-kind and technical support, including post-harvest technologies, tractors, planting and harvesting machines, drying facilities and nurseries.

74. FAO began the installation of an off-shore marine cage in waters off Gaza that will be owned by the local community as part of efforts to strengthen the resilience of local fishing communities.

### **Human rights, women, children and youth**

75. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) continued to support the national human rights institution and civil society organizations in building their capacity to engage with the treaty body mechanisms and strengthening their monitoring and follow-up of the implementation by the Government of the State of Palestine of its international human rights treaty obligations.

76. OHCHR worked with governmental institutions, civil society and other United Nations system agencies to ensure the adoption of a human rights-based approach in the response plan to COVID-19 and supported the preparation of guidance notes on issues including detention, justice, women, children and the rights of persons with disabilities.

77. UNICEF supported the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Social Development in establishing a process to follow up on the concluding observations issued by the Committee on the Rights of the Child. UNICEF and OHCHR detailed the reporting process on the two optional protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

78. UNICEF contributed to strengthening child protection systems and ensuring that documentation, and prevention and response services were in place to address grave violations. The social work curriculum was finalized. In the national intersectoral violence against children strategy for the period 2021–2023, a framework was defined for ensuring that the capacities of social workers were enhanced and children were better protected.

79. UNICEF and its partners reached 62,140 children with child protection services and with mental health and psychosocial support services.

80. UNICEF, UN-Women and UNDP provided legal aid services, including in connection with the COVID-19 response, to over 21,000 Palestinians, of whom 72 per cent were women and girls. Some 11,500 people benefited from in-person legal awareness activities.

81. UN-Women helped to provide 719 sessions of individual and group therapy and psychological first aid to female inmates detained in the correctional and rehabilitation centres in Janin, Ramallah and Jericho.

82. UN-Women supported the Palestinian Bar Association in Gaza in the development of its gender strategy. Furthermore, 86 lawyers participated in awareness-raising activities to enhance their knowledge about the Personal Status Law, violence against women and international human rights. A total of 184 university students attended awareness-raising sessions on women's rights.

83. With UNFPA support, more than 100,000 young people were reached with empowerment programmes through community-based initiatives, capacity development interventions and community awareness sessions.

84. UNFPA supported two emergency shelters for women in the West Bank and Gaza and fully equipped isolation rooms for receiving new cases during the pandemic. Altogether 70 providers of gender-based violence services were trained on safety and protection protocols for the shift to virtual and telephone services and counselling.

85. The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) engaged 40 young women and men from Khan Younis to design a safe and inclusive public space with the use of innovative digital tools and computer games.

86. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) delivered a three-month virtual training on participatory video methodology for 12 young people under the youth crime prevention initiative. In addition, UNODC developed a brochure on forensic medicine services in the State of Palestine.

87. In Gaza, the Mine Action Service implemented a community-based resilience training initiative focusing on women's empowerment, which reached 1,084 individuals, including 788 women.

88. In the West Bank, UNRWA provided counselling and case management services to 148 survivors of gender-based violence and in 181 child protection cases. An additional 118 cases were referred to external services. Immediate assistance was rendered in 63 emergency cases.

89. In Gaza, UNRWA provided mental health and psychosocial support services to 11,104 Palestine refugees and referred 901 Palestine refugee women to legal counsellors.

#### **Environment, housing and urban development**

90. UNDP enhanced access to adequate housing for 120 people through the restoration and rehabilitation of 22 houses in East Jerusalem.

91. UNDP developed a comprehensive master plan for the Wadi Gaza coastal wetlands along with an investment needs and park programme development strategy to support native biodiversity, improve water quality, eliminate solid waste and construction debris, and manage flood risk.

92. UN-Habitat delivered spatial planning support targeting 1.5 million Palestinians, mostly living in Area C. Furthermore, UN-Habitat is supporting the formulation and adoption of the flagship national urban policy for the State of Palestine.

93. UNOPS is supporting the construction of a wastewater treatment plant at the Jericho agro-industrial park, which will reduce the load of industrial wastewater generated.

### **B. United Nations system emergency assistance**

94. An estimated 1.8 million Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory needed humanitarian assistance. Given the limited extent of donor contributions, humanitarian agencies continued to streamline and prioritize activities to target the maximum number of vulnerable people in a highly constrained context. To that end, they had three priorities during the reporting period: protecting civilians; providing basic services and better access to resources to enhance livelihoods; and supporting vulnerable Palestinians in coping with the protracted crisis. The inter-agency COVID-19 response plan for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, released in April, was designed to enable effective public health and multisector interventions, with a continued emphasis on supporting those most vulnerable. Its aim is to support the efforts, led by the Government of the State of Palestine, to contain the disease and mitigate its impact.

#### **Emergency agriculture support**

95. FAO provided critical emergency agriculture support to more than 3,000 families in Gaza by installing solar energy systems to operate irrigation and poultry and dairy farms, thus ensuring the uninterrupted production of food amid the several electricity crises in Gaza.

### **Emergency food support**

96. UNRWA supported 1,043,173 Palestine refugees in Gaza with in-kind emergency food assistance. Of those, 606,037 were living below the abject poverty line and received 80 per cent of their daily caloric needs. The remaining 437,136 were living between the abject and absolute poverty lines and received 43 per cent of their daily caloric needs. The Agency established a door-to-door delivery of food baskets, stepped up hygiene measures at distribution centres and introduced an appointments system to avoid overcrowding.

97. In the West Bank, UNRWA, in partnership with WFP, provided in-kind food assistance to more than 37,000 members of Bedouin communities. A further 24,218 food-insecure individuals received cash assistance from UNRWA.

98. In Gaza, 24,000 people affected by COVID-19 received support from WFP through the cash-based transfer programme. WFP extended its direct cash assistance to 7,332 people under its pilot multipurpose cash project.

99. UNICEF supported 3,191 young children by assessing their state of nutrition and their early childhood development. Of those children, 109 were treated for malnutrition. A total of 2,732 high-risk pregnant and lactating mothers received 85 educational sessions on various topics.

### **Emergency education support**

100. UNICEF facilitated safe access to schools for 658 children and 32 teachers in the H2 zone of Hebron.

101. With UNICEF support, 36,336 children affected by the humanitarian situation were provided with essential stationery kits to enable them to continue learning.

102. In response to the pandemic, UNRWA adopted blended learning arrangements in all its schools in the West Bank. Approximately 32,200 students accessed remote learning during periods of school closures.

### **Emergency health support**

103. The United Nations and its partners supported the efforts of the Palestinian Government to control the pandemic, reduce the demand for critical hospital care services and provide adequate care for COVID-19 patients. The United Nations and its partners facilitated the procurement and delivery of personal protective equipment, oxygen therapy machines, testing materials and other critical equipment.

104. WHO and UNICEF supported the Government's preparedness efforts for receiving and administering COVID-19 vaccines and facilitated vaccine procurement through the COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access Facility Advance Market Commitment (COVAX-AMC). The first batch of some 60,000 vaccines was delivered to the West Bank and Gaza on 17 March.

105. WHO provided technical assistance to the Ministry of Health in its efforts to strengthen the health-care system. Activities included the establishment of respiratory triage centres and of quarantine, isolation, and treatment facilities; and the implementation of good practices for disease surveillance, contact tracing, laboratory diagnosis, infection prevention and control, clinical management of critical cases and respiratory triage through the training of front-line workers and the provision of the latest evidence-based guidance.

106. WHO worked with the Ministry of Health to develop the national emergency action plan for responding to mental health needs during the pandemic and conducted a study on the impact of COVID-19 on the mental health of Palestinian adolescents.

107. WHO and UNICEF assisted in the formation of a risk communication and community engagement task force comprising the Ministry of Health, the Bank of Palestine, the Palestinian International Cooperation Agency, United Nations system agencies and non-governmental organizations to produce a national health awareness campaign.

108. WHO continued to support pre-hospital response services, emergency departments and acute surgical capacities, as well as limb-saving and limb-reconstructive surgery and treatment services to respond to the long-term needs of those who had sustained injuries during demonstrations of the Great March of Return in Gaza from March 2018 to December 2019.

109. In Gaza, UNRWA provided secondary or tertiary care to 4,865 refugees classified as poor. An additional 4,500 patients received life-saving medicines.

110. In the West Bank and Gaza, UNRWA introduced specific COVID-19 prevention measures, prioritized essential services, established a triage system at its health-care facilities, introduced telemedicine consultations and started home delivery of medicines.

111. UNRWA provided uninterrupted mental health and psychosocial support services in Gaza and the West Bank. Mental health counsellors saw 2,541 adults in Gaza and 3,054 adults in the West Bank.

112. UNICEF ensured that quality essential life-saving health and nutrition services, including the provision of assistive devices, were accessible, available and acceptable to 27,604 high-risk pregnant and lactating women and 112,391 children under the age of five.

113. In Gaza, UNICEF supported the training of around 55 nurses and midwives on the updated postnatal home visit protocol and ensured delivery of postnatal home visit services to 6,579 high-risk pregnant and lactating women and babies. UNICEF-supported interventions contributed to the improved quality of neonatal health-care services in five neonatal health-care units benefiting 14,650 newborns.

114. UNFPA provided an estimated 52,000 people living in Area C of the West Bank with access to essential primary health-care services at mobile clinics.

115. UNDP strengthened the health-care sector response to COVID-19 through the deployment of 143 health-care workers in Gaza and 689 health-care workers in the West Bank.

#### **Emergency housing support**

116. UNOPS supported the reconstruction of 310 houses in Gaza and the rehabilitation of another 363.

117. In 2020, UNRWA rehabilitated 396 substandard shelters in Gaza. Following the hostilities in August 2014, a total of 7,445 houses were categorized as totally destroyed and in need of reconstruction. While significant progress has since been achieved, as at January 2021, approximately 350 families have yet to start the reconstruction of their completely destroyed shelters.

118. UNRWA provided cash assistance to 54 displaced families following the demolition of their homes by the Israeli authorities. Furthermore, 284 Palestine refugee families received cash assistance and referrals to meet their humanitarian needs resulting from search-and-arrest operations by Israeli security forces in Palestine refugee camps.

119. UNDP supported 1,397 internally displaced people in returning to their homes following the reconstruction of 215 totally damaged housing units in Gaza, which generated approximately 60,000 workdays.

#### **Emergency income generation**

120. From 1 January to 31 December 2020, UNRWA helped to provide 8,105 people with short-term job opportunities through cash-for-work arrangements, which generated approximately 416,192 workdays.

121. UN-Women provided 300 women rendered vulnerable by the pandemic with cash-for-work assistance and job placements in service sectors deemed essential during the lockdown.

#### **Emergency water and sanitation support**

122. UNICEF supported the supply of safe drinking water for vulnerable communities and children in the West Bank through the rehabilitation and construction of water pipeline networks in Area C and the creation of hydraulic maps to ensure that water was distributed fairly.

123. UNICEF provided hygiene kits against e-vouchers for 18,000 households in Gaza and 5,000 households in the West Bank. In addition, UNICEF distributed 86,520 water bottles and 2,040 hygiene kits to quarantine and health centres in Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. UNICEF provided hygiene materials to schools and conducted COVID-19-related awareness-raising activities for over 3,500 students.

124. UNRWA continued to provide basic water and sanitation services in all eight refugee camps in Gaza and 19 refugee camps in the West Bank. In response to the pandemic, UNRWA enhanced hygiene and sanitation measures, including through the hiring of 300 additional sanitation workers in Gaza and 304 additional workers in the West Bank.

### **C. United Nations system support to Palestinian institutions**

125. UNDP and other United Nations system agencies are working with key stakeholders to support an inclusive, transparent and effective political process for the upcoming electoral cycle. Doing so includes strengthening institutional capacities and promoting the participation of women, young people, persons with disabilities and marginalized communities in line with human rights obligations.

126. WFP provided support to the Ministry of Social Development for making the national social protection system more efficient and robust. WFP, ILO and UNICEF are supporting the Ministry of Social Development in strengthening the capacity of national systems to include persons with disabilities and elderly people.

127. FAO provided technical support to the Ministry of Agriculture for the formulation of a national food and nutrition security policy and a national investment plan for food and nutrition security and sustainable agriculture for the period 2020–2022.

128. FAO provided technical support to the Ministry of Agriculture for leading, coordinating and ensuring the functionality of a multi-stakeholder interest group for value chain and markets.

129. UNOPS continued to provide technical assistance to the High Judicial Council in strengthening its capacities for strategic planning and the operational management of facilities.

130. UNODC supported the forensic science laboratory of the Palestinian police, helped to establish a new biological screening section within the laboratory for the examination of biological evidence of sexual and gender-based violence, and provided related training.

131. In 2020, UNODC continued to provide technical assistance to the national programme on drug control, and crime prevention and criminal justice, in the revision of a draft law to combat trafficking in persons in the State of Palestine.

132. UNFPA supported the establishment of an adolescent health unit at the Ministry of Health. The effort was accompanied by the development of a three-year strategic framework on sexual and reproductive health for adolescents and young people endorsed by the Ministry of Health and the Palestinian Coalition for Adolescent Health.

133. With the support of WHO, the Palestinian National Institute of Public Health developed a national COVID-19 surveillance system in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and developed a public-facing website with information about COVID-19.

134. UN-Women worked with the Palestinian police, the High Judicial Council, the Office of the Attorney General, the Supreme Judge Department, and the Ministry of Social Development to support the development of 14 protocols including standard operating procedures, five emergency plans, and gender-responsive guidelines on strategic litigation for violence against women prosecutors.

135. UN-Women facilitated training for 78 judges, police, and prosecutors to enhance their knowledge and skills about implementing laws and policies in line with international standards. Eighteen specialized prosecutors and heads of units for family and juvenile protection were trained in implementing risk assessment policies and ensuring protection for women victims and survivors of violence.

136. UNESCO provided policy advice to the Ministry of Education for the education reform with regard to digital learning, quality assurance, governance and teacher development.

137. The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia supported the State of Palestine by organizing the second advanced workshop on the implementation of the institutional gaps assessment methodology in workforce planning.

#### **D. Private sector development**

138. In 2020, UNRWA provided 1,790 microfinance loans worth \$2.23 million to Palestine refugees in Gaza. In the West Bank, UNRWA delivered 4,516 loans, valued at \$6.18 million.

139. ILO provided support for the strengthening of the Cooperative Work Agency to fulfil its mandate in serving the cooperative sector as a regulatory administrative body and a centre for promotional services. In 2020, ILO supported the update of the Cooperative Work Agency sectoral strategy (2021–2023).

140. UN-Women provided technical assistance to the financial sector, in particular the banking sector, with the aim of mainstreaming gender in the workplace and improving the access of women to upper-level management positions.

## **E. Coordination of United Nations assistance**

141. Collaboration and coordination between donors and United Nations system entities continued under the auspices of the Deputy Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, United Nations Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The humanitarian country team met regularly to agree on humanitarian advocacy and response measures. The United Nations country team continued to coordinate its development programming with the priorities outlined in the Palestinian National Policy Agenda for the period 2017–2022.

## **IV. Donor response to the crisis**

### **Budgetary and fiscal support**

142. The Palestinian Authority continued to face severe fiscal constraints, hampering its ability to address humanitarian and development needs. In both 2019 and 2020, Israel and the Palestinian Authority became locked in a dispute over the withholding by Israel of clearance revenues owed to the Palestinian Authority and, in both years, no clearance revenue was transferred for many months. This situation has created an unprecedented fiscal challenge for the Palestinian Authority, which adopted emergency measures in both 2019 and 2020 to cope with the loss of the majority of its revenue. To finance the deficit, the Palestinian Authority relied on donor support and financing from national banks.

143. Donor support to the Occupied Palestinian Territory remained near historic lows, owing in part to an earlier decision by the United States to cease funding UNRWA and to allocate a significant portion of the programme budget of the United States Agency for International Development elsewhere. Based on data from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, on a per capita basis, net official development assistance decreased by around 37.3 per cent between 2009 and 2019.

### **Donor coordination**

144. The local aid coordination structure was further reformed and brought under the Office of the Prime Minister. The structure continued to function as the main forum for Government-led coordination of donor-funded development interventions in 15 sectors.

145. The Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians held two meetings during the reporting period, in June 2020 and in February 2021, and convened a local donor meeting in December 2020. The Committee maintained its strong support for the implementation of the package of urgent humanitarian and economic interventions agreed upon in September 2018 and for the COVID-19 response. Donor support provided space for political efforts by Egypt, the United Nations and others to prevent renewed conflict and support Palestinian reconciliation. It also provided the impetus for larger-scale development projects. Qatar funded fuel supplies for the power plant in Gaza, which increased the electricity supply to Gaza to an average of 12 hours per day in 2020. Considerable progress was made on the construction of critical water and sanitation facilities and the importation of equipment for the health-care sector.

## **V. Unmet needs**

146. The severity of the health and economic crisis facing the Occupied Palestinian Territory is reflected in the funding requested in the 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan and in the number of people targeted. Humanitarian partners are appealing for



\$417 million, significantly more than the \$348 million sought before the pandemic, in 2019. By March 2021, 70 per cent of the funds requested for the 2020 Humanitarian Response Plan and 90 per cent of the amount requested in the inter-agency COVID-19 response plan had been raised. However, only 22 per cent of the \$417 million requested in the 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan has been secured, leaving significant gaps across most sectors.

147. Severe financial challenges continued to constrain UNRWA operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. In 2020, UNRWA emergency operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory remained largely underfunded, with only 56.4 per cent of the required funds pledged and received by the end of the year. Critical operations could only be maintained thanks to a grant from the Central Emergency Response Fund and advances from the UNRWA programme budget. In 2020, UNRWA required \$152 million to cover the additional requirements for its COVID-19 response across all five fields of operation. As at December 2020, Gaza had received 55 per cent of the total requirements, while in the West Bank, 86 per cent had been received for interventions specific to COVID-19.

## VI. Challenges

148. The continued absence of a political process to end the occupation and achieve a viable two-State solution continues to be the largest impediment to Palestinian development. Continued Israeli settlement expansion, demolitions, closures, access and movement restrictions, and other aspects of the protracted military occupation continue to have a severe impact on the humanitarian, economic, social and political life of Palestinians and their ability to exercise their fundamental human rights. Violence and incitement continue to perpetuate mutual fear and suspicion. The internal Palestinian political division also places formidable obstacles to addressing humanitarian needs and restoring a political horizon. Decreasing funding to the State of Palestine, and to the United Nations, poses a further challenge to the provision of development and humanitarian assistance. Moreover, the viability of the Palestinian Authority has been severely undermined by an economic and fiscal crisis and by the negative effects of the pandemic.

149. The pandemic has had far-reaching humanitarian and development consequences. It remains a persistent health threat that has caused serious economic fallout.

## VII. Conclusions

150. The operational context for the work of the United Nations during the reporting period was increasingly difficult because of the challenges outlined in the present report. The United Nations will continue to work towards the realization of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#), [338 \(1973\)](#), [1397 \(2002\)](#), [1515 \(2003\)](#), [1850 \(2008\)](#), [1860 \(2009\)](#) and [2334 \(2016\)](#), an end to the occupation that began in 1967 and the establishment of a sovereign, democratic, viable and contiguous Palestinian State, existing side by side in peace with a secure Israel. It is only by realizing the vision of two States living side by side in peace, security and mutual recognition, with Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and the State of Palestine, and all final status issues resolved permanently through negotiations, that the legitimate aspirations of both peoples will be achieved.



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**Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance to the United Nations, including special economic assistance**

## Economic and Social Council

**2022 session**

23 July 2021–22 July 2022

Agenda item 14

**Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations**

## Assistance to the Palestinian people

### Report of the Secretary-General

#### *Summary*

The present report, submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution [76/126](#), contains an assessment of the assistance received by the Palestinian people and proposals for responding to unmet needs. It provides a description of the efforts made by the United Nations, in cooperation with the Government of Palestine, donors and civil society, to support Palestinian people and institutions.

The reporting period (1 April 2021–31 March 2022) was characterized by continued tensions and violence and the persistence of negative trends, further impeding the resumption of meaningful negotiations and the achievement of a viable two-State solution and adversely affecting prospects for peace. Most notable was the escalation of conflict between Israel and Palestinian armed groups in the Gaza Strip that occurred in May 2021, in which 259 Palestinians, 9 Israeli citizens and 3 residents of Israel were killed. The conflict generated damage in Gaza estimated at between \$290 and \$380 million, while economic losses reached up to \$200 million, according to United Nations and partner assessments conducted in the immediate aftermath of the escalation. In addition, throughout the reporting period, the dire fiscal condition of the Palestinian Authority had a negative impact on its ability to deliver basic services.

During the reporting period, the United Nations continued to coordinate and deliver humanitarian and development assistance to the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Despite the challenges, the United Nations system raised a total of \$370 million for the 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan for the Occupied Palestinian Authority and \$61.1 million for the flash appeal following the escalation of hostilities

\* [A/77/50](#).



and unrest in May 2021. Overall, \$431.1 million was delivered in humanitarian assistance to the Occupied Palestinian Territory by the United Nations. Some of that assistance was targeted at Palestinian individuals and communities in areas not under the direct administration of the Palestinian Authority, including East Jerusalem and Area C, in the occupied West Bank, and Gaza. In addition to delivering humanitarian assistance, the United Nations continued to implement its \$140 million coronavirus disease (COVID-19) socioeconomic response plan, reaching over 2.4 million Palestinians in 2021.

Under the 2022 Humanitarian Response Plan for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, \$510 million is sought to provide basic food, protection, health care, shelter, water and sanitation to 1.6 million Palestinians who have been identified as those most in need of humanitarian interventions across the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

## I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 76/126, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it, at its seventy-seventh session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution, containing an assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people, an assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them. The reporting period is from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.
2. Information on the political and socioeconomic situation of the Occupied Palestinian Territory is provided in several periodic reports prepared by United Nations entities and submitted to various United Nations bodies, including the monthly Security Council briefings by the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process; the reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 2334 (2016); the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan; the annual report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA); and the biannual reports of the Office of the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians.
3. During the reporting period, the global coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic continued to have a negative socioeconomic impact in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Nevertheless, given the decline in the daily number of new cases and the roll-out of the vaccination campaign supported by the United Nations, COVID-19-related measures were progressively eased, and the Palestinian economy started its recovery.
4. The United Nations continued to implement its COVID-19 socioeconomic response plan, which included activities to strengthen the protection of health services and systems, reaching over 2.4 million Palestinians. The plan also supported the strengthening of social protection systems, benefiting over 2.8 million Palestinians. More than 15,000 Palestinians received support for economic growth and social cohesion.
5. In Gaza, the most significant conflict escalation since 2014 occurred between 10 and 21 May 2021. It resulted in significant loss of life, injuries and damage to civilian infrastructure, such as residential and commercial buildings, in particular hospitals and health centres, water and sanitation facilities and transport, energy and communications networks. The conflict also resulted in explosive remnants of war contamination that hinders reconstruction and safety efforts as well as future infrastructure projects.
6. On 6 July, the World Bank, the United Nations and the European Union released the Gaza rapid damage and needs assessment, according to which damage in Gaza was estimated at between \$290 and \$380 million, while economic losses reached up to \$200 million. The social sector was hit the hardest, significantly weakening the safety net for the most vulnerable. Immediate and short-term recovery and reconstruction needs were estimated at between \$345 and \$485 million.
7. The humanitarian, economic and development needs of the Palestinian people are reflected in several complementary strategic and resource mobilization documents. For the 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan for the Occupied Palestinian

Territory, the United Nations system raised a total of \$374 million, representing 89.6 per cent of the total requested (\$417.6 million). Overall, \$436 million was delivered in humanitarian assistance to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which included \$62 million raised following the escalation in May 2021. Under the 2022 Humanitarian Response Plan for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, \$510 million is sought to provide basic food, protection, health care, shelter, water and sanitation to 1.6 million Palestinians who have been identified as those most in need of support. That is significantly more than the \$417 million sought in 2021. The elevated amount reflects the severity of the health and economic crisis facing the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the impact of the escalation in May 2021.

8. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework for 2018–2022 contains the collective vision and response of the United Nations to the national development plan of the Government of Palestine contained in the Palestinian National Policy Agenda for the period 2017–2022. In the reporting period, the United Nations started the preparatory work for the next programmatic framework, the first United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework since the Secretary-General’s reform of the United Nations development system.

9. Throughout the reporting period, the Office of the Special Coordinator continued its efforts to support conflict prevention and a return to peace negotiations, and to promote coordination among the Government of Palestine, the United Nations, the international community and the Government of Israel.

## **II. Overview of the current situation**

### **A. Political context**

10. The reporting period was marked by the continuation of the negative overall trajectory of the conflict, characterized by the continued military occupation by Israel of Palestinian territory, the absence of a political process to end the occupation and the wider Israeli-Palestinian conflict, ongoing settlement activities, including a notable acceleration of settlement advancements in occupied East Jerusalem, demolitions of Palestinian structures, violence and the persistence of the Palestinian Authority’s financial crisis. In Gaza, the situation remained extremely fragile, with the most serious escalation since 2014 deepening the humanitarian crisis amid the continued Israeli closures.

11. Despite these challenges, the COVID-19 caseload declined, as did public health-related movement restrictions, though the socioeconomic impact of the pandemic will be felt for years to come. High-level dialogue between the parties was resumed and some progress was made on a range of civil and economic issues, but implementation was slow.

12. Violence increased during the reporting period. In April and early May, rising tensions in occupied East Jerusalem, exacerbated by the planned eviction by Israeli authorities of four Palestinian families in the Shaykh Jarrah neighbourhood and by clashes between Israeli security forces and Palestinians in and around the Old City and holy sites in Jerusalem, coinciding with the holy month of Ramadan, led to the worst escalation of armed hostilities since 2014 ([S/2021/584](#), paras. 12–19).

13. During the escalation, Palestinian militants fired more than 4,000 rockets indiscriminately from Gaza, including from highly populated civilian neighbourhoods, towards cities and towns across southern and central Israel; and Israeli forces fired more than 1,500 missiles and 2,455 shells into Gaza. The armed hostilities took a severe toll on the civilian population. Between 10 and 21 May, 259

Palestinians were killed in Gaza, including 66 children and 41 women (4 of whom were pregnant), with 248 of them, including 63 children, killed in air strikes and by falling rockets. Nine Israelis, including two children, four women and one soldier, and three foreign nationals were killed, and hundreds of Israelis were injured during the hostilities.

14. Against the backdrop of ongoing settlement activity and pressure on Palestinian communities in the occupied West Bank, incidents of violence, vandalism and damage to property by Israeli extremists, including settlers, against Palestinians increased. There was also an increase in the number of attacks by Palestinians against Israeli civilians in the occupied West Bank, mostly the throwing of stones and Molotov cocktails at vehicles.

15. The Civil Administration High Planning Committee, which discusses plans for new construction in settlements in Area C of the occupied West Bank, convened once during the reporting period and advanced plans for some 3,100 housing units. This was half the number advanced during the previous period (6,200). However, the advancement of plans in occupied East Jerusalem settlements spiked at 2,600 housing units, up from 600 in the previous period, further eroding the possibility of establishing a contiguous Palestinian State. The threat of eviction of Palestinian families in the occupied East Jerusalem neighbourhood of Shaykh Jarrah continued. One family was evicted during the reporting period following lengthy legal proceedings. In another high-profile case, the Supreme Court of Israel ruled that four families in the neighbourhood would not be evicted and would be recognized as “protected tenants”, paying a nominal rent, until a determination could be made on their claims to ownership. A civil case over ownership is ongoing.

16. On 30 April, the President of the State of Palestine, Mahmoud Abbas, said that he was indefinitely postponing the Palestinian Legislative Council, presidential and Palestinian National Council elections scheduled for 2021 until the participation of Palestinians in occupied East Jerusalem was guaranteed by Israel. Local council elections were held in the West Bank in two phases, on 11 December 2021 and 26 March 2022, but none were held in the Gaza Strip. A spokesperson for Hamas, Hazim Qasem, said that the demands of Hamas matched national aspirations and must be discussed within the framework of a “serious national dialogue to discuss the elections at all levels, setting specific timetables, with written guarantees that they will be respected”.

17. On 24 June, the Palestinian activist and former legislative candidate Nizar Banat died during a Palestinian security forces arrest operation during which he was severely beaten. His death, which came in the context of increased arrests by Palestinian security forces targeting political and social media activists, drew widespread condemnation. Thousands of Palestinians demonstrated throughout the occupied West Bank, and at times were forcibly dispersed with violence by uniformed Palestinian security forces and plainclothes officers. On 6 September, a military court charged 14 officers from the Palestinian security forces with Mr. Banat’s death. His family has not accepted the results of the Palestinian Authority’s investigation. A series of hearings were held against 14 members of the Preventive Security Forces accused of involvement in Mr. Banat’s death.

18. On 22 October, the Ministry of Defence of Israel announced the designation of six Palestinian non-governmental organizations as terrorist organizations. It subsequently accused them of constituting “an inseparable arm” of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and extended the applicability of the designations to the occupied West Bank through military orders on 7 November. In accordance with Israeli legislation, members of a designated terror organization or any individual who provides material or other support could be criminally prosecuted and imprisoned.

19. Throughout the reporting period, the United Nations and its regional and international partners continued to urge Israelis and Palestinians to take concrete action to restore a political horizon to end the occupation and achieve a viable two-State solution. The envoys of the Middle East Quartet met regularly to discuss the situation on the ground and the latest political developments, as well as to chart a way forward.

## **B. Humanitarian and socioeconomic context**

### **Economic and fiscal developments**

20. In the reporting period, the economic and fiscal situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory remained dire. The economic recovery from the 2020 crisis, when the gross domestic product (GDP) per capita contracted by 13.4 per cent overall (12.9 per cent in the West Bank and 15 per cent in Gaza), has been partial and slow: in 2021, GDP per capita growth was estimated to reach 4.3 per cent (5 per cent in the West Bank and 0.4 per cent in Gaza). The World Bank estimated that real GDP growth is expected to reach 3.7 per cent in 2022. Economic productivity has not returned to pre-pandemic levels and the fiscal condition of the Palestinian Authority remained precarious. While the Palestinian Authority's revenues have recently improved, expenditure continues to grow and adequate budget support from donors has not been forthcoming, hindering the Palestinian Authority's ability to address Palestinian development challenges.

21. The overall unemployment rate in the Occupied Palestinian Territory was 26.4 per cent in 2021 (16.9 per cent in the West Bank and 44.7 per cent in Gaza). The participation of women in the labour force remains among the lowest in the world, at 16.1 per cent. Youth unemployment remains high, with stark regional differences (78.8 per cent in the Gaza Strip and 35.6 per cent in the West Bank).

22. Challenges related to the protracted Israeli occupation, including restrictions on the movement of goods and people, constraints on foreign trade and the lack of Palestinian access to key productive resources, continued to have a detrimental impact on the capacity of the Palestinian economy to absorb new labour market entrants, which drives the high unemployment rates.

23. During the reporting period, Israel eased some access and movement restrictions on Palestinians. This contributed to a rise in economic activity in the West Bank and Gaza and increased integration between the two economies. As at 27 March 2022, Israel had approved the issuance of some 20,000 permits for Palestinians in Gaza to enter Israel, mostly to work in construction and agriculture. About 11,500 permits have been issued so far. In total, the number of Palestinians working in Israel and the settlements, including workers from the West Bank, increased significantly, reaching about 153,000 workers in the fourth quarter of 2021, of whom 22,400 worked in the settlements.

### **Humanitarian developments**

24. According to the 2022 Humanitarian Response Plan, the number of food-insecure people is estimated at 1.75 million. A multisectoral needs assessment is being undertaken to provide updated figures on food insecurity and the impact of multilayered protracted crises, including the escalation in May 2021 and the COVID-19 pandemic. The World Food Programme (WFP) estimated that several groups became vulnerable and food-insecure as a result of the escalation, including 2,000 internally displaced families, 20,000 labourers who lost their income, many owners of economic facilities and farming communities.

25. In the reporting period, a total of 342 Palestinians, including 82 children and 43 women, were killed by Israeli forces in the Occupied Palestinian Territory – a marked increase from the previous reporting period, when 19 deaths and 1,662 injuries were reported. The vast majority were killed during the escalation in Gaza in May 2021, including at least 130 civilians. A total of 20,772 Palestinians were injured, including 1,208 by live ammunition, 4,245 by rubber bullets and 12,316 by tear gas inhalation. All injuries required medical treatment. On at least 580 occasions, assailants believed or known to be Israeli settlers either killed or injured Palestinians (3 fatalities and 192 injuries in 133 incidents) or damaged or stole their property (447 incidents), the highest numbers recorded in five years. In the reporting period, there were 16 Israelis killed: 9 during the escalation of hostilities in May 2021 by rockets fired from Gaza into Israel (an additional 3 foreigners were also killed during the hostilities); 1 Israeli soldier was killed during a demonstration near the perimeter fence with Gaza; 3 Israelis (and 2 additional foreigners) were killed in a shooting attack carried out by a Palestinian on 29 March 2022; and 3 Israelis (1 soldier and 2 civilians) were killed by Palestinians in the West Bank. There were 179 Israelis injured, including 16 women and 9 children.

26. The demolition of Palestinian residential, livelihood and service infrastructure in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, continued during the reporting period. The Israeli authorities demolished, seized or forced the demolition of 813 Palestinian structures across the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, including 145 donor-funded structures, citing the absence of Israeli-issued building permits, which are almost impossible for Palestinians to obtain. The number is approximately 20 per cent lower than in the previous reporting period.

### **Movement, humanitarian access and operational space**

27. Humanitarian operations in the West Bank continued to be hampered by the imposition by Israel of physical obstacles (such as the barrier, checkpoints, roadblocks and gates) and administrative barriers (such as the building permit regime). These restrictions affect access to East Jerusalem and other areas between the barrier and the Green Line. Restrictions on Palestinian access to land and resources, in particular in Area C, continued to be a concern.

28. In the reporting period, 169,721 people departed from Gaza through the Erez crossing, a considerable increase from the previous reporting period (10,801), when the crossing was largely closed owing to COVID-19 restrictions. Similarly, the Rafah crossing recorded about 115,602 exits during the reporting period, which was also much higher than in the previous reporting period (25,400).

29. Kerem Shalom remained the primary crossing for the movement of commodities to and from Gaza. On average, 6,517 truckloads of goods entered Gaza per month during the reporting period, less than the monthly average in the previous reporting period (8,016). An average of 413 trucks per month exited Gaza, mostly to West Bank markets, which is significantly higher than the monthly average in the previous reporting period (291).

30. The fishing zone off the Gaza coast largely remained at 15 nautical miles in the south and 6 in the north, but was occasionally expanded and restricted, and sometimes completely closed, during 2021, including during the escalation in May. These and other restrictions were imposed by Israel, citing security concerns.

### **Barrier**

31. The United Nations Register of Damage Caused by the Construction of the Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, established pursuant to General Assembly resolution [ES-10/17](#), continued its outreach and claim intake activities to “serve as a



record, in documentary form, of the damage caused to all natural and legal persons concerned as a result of the construction of the wall by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem". Since the establishment of the Register in December 2007, more than 73,200 claims and over 1.5 million supporting documents have been collected in all nine governorates and in 269 of the 271 Palestinian communities affected by the constructed section of the wall. In the reporting period, Palestinian farmers continued to face difficulties in obtaining Israeli authorization to access their land in restricted areas behind the barrier in the "seam zone".

### **III. United Nations response**

#### **A. Human and social development**

32. The United Nations continued to coordinate and deliver humanitarian and development assistance in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Some of that assistance was targeted at Palestinian individuals and communities in areas beyond the reach of the Palestinian Authority, including East Jerusalem and Area C, in the occupied West Bank, and Gaza. The United Nations focused its efforts on the most vulnerable segments of the population.

##### **Education**

33. UNRWA provided free primary education to 291,100 students in 278 elementary and preparatory schools in Gaza (140,492 girls and 150,608 boys) and to 46,066 students in 96 elementary and preparatory schools in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem (27,657 girls and 18,408 boys).

34. Technical and vocational education and training was provided to over 1,800 students in Gaza and 969 students in the West Bank through two vocational training centres. In addition, 696 students enrolled in the UNRWA Education Science Faculty for teacher training in the West Bank.

35. In Gaza, UNRWA constructed 2 new schools and rehabilitated another 110 as part of routine maintenance.

36. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) supported the Ministry of Education in improving access to quality, safe and inclusive learning opportunities.

37. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) supported improved access to education for over 53,836 students at 58 schools in East Jerusalem and the West Bank, including installing renewable energy in 3 schools in Gaza. Some 8,000 higher education students benefited from improved learning environments because of the rehabilitation of Al-Quds University. In Gaza, 234 young people completed their academic studies with Al Fakhoora scholarships and 244 alumni received internships and training in the private sector.

38. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) conducted training on educational material to be broadcast on the Palestinian channel Educational TV. UNESCO educational activities on artificial intelligence and coding reached 500 students in the West Bank and Gaza.

39. In Gaza, the Mine Action Service provided training to over 36,000 persons at risk of being harmed by explosive remnants of war. The Service continues to provide support regarding the explosive ordnance disposal requirements of all United Nations school facilities in Gaza. Following the escalation in May 2021, it declared 9 out of 16 deep buried bomb sites clear in Gaza.

## Health

40. The World Health Organization (WHO) continued to promote universal health coverage and the right to health through the strengthening of the health-care system, the monitoring of barriers to health-care access and attacks against health-care facilities, and advocacy to address policies and practices affecting the health rights of Palestinians. The organization continued its work to enhance information systems, build capacities through the implementation of a regional framework for action and undertook assessments of the management and performance of the primary health-care system.

41. WHO supported the implementation of a system-strengthening approach to reduce neonatal mortality. Early essential newborn care has been put in place in five government hospitals and four non-governmental maternity hospitals in Gaza. WHO worked with the Ministry of Health to develop and implement standard operating procedures for the prevention and control of infections for pregnant women and newborns.

42. WHO and UNICEF supported the Government of Palestine national vaccination campaign by facilitating the provision of nine consignments of COVID-19 vaccine doses through the global COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access (COVAX) Facility Advance Market Commitment. In total, over 1.7 million people have been fully vaccinated, and 2 million people have received at least one dose of vaccine in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

43. In Gaza, UNRWA conducted approximately 2.7 million face-to-face primary health-care patient consultations at its 22 health-care facilities and over 860,000 telemedicine consultations. In the West Bank, 895,000 consultations were provided at its 43 health-care facilities.

44. UNRWA provided 14,065 Palestine refugees in Gaza with secondary and tertiary health-care subsidies and continued to prioritize care for the 102,993 patients in Gaza with non-communicable diseases.

45. With support from UNICEF, WHO and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), nearly 8,000 newborns benefited from upgraded maternal and neonatal health-care services, while 14 maternity and neonatal units were equipped with essential drugs and equipment. Some 15,500 mothers and newborns continued to access improved maternity and neonatal health-care services in Gaza.

46. UNICEF supported the provision of early interventions for high-risk pregnant and lactating women and children with developmental delays and disabilities, with over 630 children benefiting from specialized services.

47. UNFPA provided capacity development for health-care providers on essential sexual and reproductive health services. Over 94,500 women, men, young people, boys and girls were provided with available life-saving services, screening and mental health and psychosocial support through mobile clinics, subsidies, nurse navigators, midwifery-led counselling home visits and referrals.

48. UNFPA supported a total of 11,970 beneficiaries with mental health and psychosocial support, case management and legal consultation services.

49. UNDP enhanced the provision of essential health services to vulnerable communities across the West Bank, establishing local hospital boards and installing vital equipment and health-care units, including a blood bank, a comprehensive microbiological unit, incubators and a digital radiography device.

50. In Gaza, UNDP contributed to the provision of essential medical supplies and consumables as well as fuel for the operation of Ministry of Health facilities and local municipalities.

51. The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) supported the procurement and delivery of medical equipment and supplies required for enhancing laboratory testing capacity at Al Makassed hospital in East Jerusalem and health facilities in Gaza.

### **Water and sanitation**

52. UNICEF continued with the construction of the second phase of the desalination plant in Gaza to provide additional access to safely managed water for 175,000 people. The first phase remained operational throughout the year, maintaining uninterrupted water production for 76,000 people.

53. In the West Bank, UNICEF initiated the upgrade and operation of the water network, aimed at reaching 76,200 people with safe access to water.

54. UNICEF rehabilitated and upgraded water and sanitation facilities in 20 schools, benefiting nearly 50,000 children.

55. UNDP supported the Palestinian Water Authority in developing a water supply system to meet current water demands at the Jericho Agro-Industrial Park. It also strengthened solid waste and wastewater management and promoted the transition to renewable energy systems in Gaza and the Jordan Valley.

56. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) supported the installation of an electromagnetic water desalination system in Jericho to enable the desalination and reuse of around 800 m<sup>3</sup> of high-salinity groundwater daily to irrigate agricultural land.

57. The Mine Action Service conducted explosive remnants of war risk assessments for water projects implemented by UNICEF and the Office of the Quartet, with risk assessments for 72,640 m<sup>2</sup> of land, which benefited vital infrastructure projects.

### **Employment**

58. UNDP generated 3,968 employment opportunities for workers through investments in 34 social infrastructure projects. In addition, 132 permanent jobs were created.

59. UNDP provided technical support for the establishment of a national help desk, which reached around 3,000 micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises. In addition, UNDP provided financial support to 126 micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises. It also strengthened the resilience of 612 small-scale farmers and 13 cooperatives in the Jordan Valley by providing necessary agricultural inputs.

60. The International Labour Organization (ILO) supported the launch and implementation of the first national employment strategy, which is aimed at addressing labour market challenges and promoting policy coherence.

61. ILO supported the National Wages Committee deliberations for adjustments to the minimum wage, which led to an increase in the national minimum wage from 1,450 to 1,880 Israeli shekels per month as from January 2022 (equivalent to approximately \$432 and \$561, respectively).

62. ILO supported the development of an occupational safety and health national profile. It also supported the Ministry of Labour in developing occupational safety and health and national labour inspection policies and strategies and the national reporting mechanism for occupational injuries and diseases.

63. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) strengthened the capacity of 24 stakeholders in the economic sector to provide gender and women's economic empowerment services to women workers, business owners and entrepreneurs.

64. FAO provided co-investment support to 205 initiatives totalling \$5.2 million. In addition, it supported 250 young people in pursuing internship opportunities in the agrifood sector.

65. UNESCO supported the Ministry of Labour and other stakeholders in carrying out a comprehensive needs assessment and gap analysis to evaluate the existing labour management information system and other related subsystems.

### **Targeted social protection**

66. In Gaza, UNRWA continued to provide quarterly food baskets to more than 1 million refugees, including 100,000 social safety net recipients. Another 36,129 beneficiaries in the West Bank were assisted through cash-based transfers.

67. UN-Women and UNFPA supported the Ministry of Social Development in reviewing the national referral system for women victims and survivors of gender-based violence and those at risk of violence.

68. WFP continued to support the Palestinian Authority's social safety net programme through cash-based transfers and in-kind food distribution for around 350,000 people and injected approximately \$16 million each month into the local economy.

69. Through its cash-based transfers platforms, WFP supported 5,300 vulnerable women in purchasing food, personal and household hygiene products from its 300 contracted shops across Gaza and the West Bank.

70. UNFPA provided 2,347 vulnerable women with vouchers and cash assistance to respond to the urgent needs of vulnerable families and women at risk of gender-based violence in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

71. UNOPS supported the procurement and delivery of 300 walkers and 160 wheelchairs to vulnerable elderly people and people with disabilities.

### **Culture**

72. UNESCO inaugurated the Old Hebron Museum and launched the first Palestinian Virtual Museum of Archaeological Objects, while continuing to supervise the renovation works in the Riwaya Museum in Bethlehem.

73. UNESCO also conducted a comprehensive study on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on culture, exploring the possibility of investing in digital technologies as an alternate way to foster Palestinian culture in times of emergency.

### **Food security and agriculture**

74. FAO supported 13 farmers' and women's cooperatives with post-harvest and food processing machines and equipment, reaching 1,339 members of cooperatives. In addition, it supported the establishment of two post-harvest cold storage facilities in the West Bank.

75. FAO supported the establishment of one farmers market in the West Bank in support of 116 cooperatives and their members.

76. FAO continued the installation of an offshore marine cage in Gaza waters that will be owned by the local community, as part of efforts to strengthen the resilience

of fishing communities. Fingerlings and fish feed were procured to launch the first production cycle.

77. WFP supported 6,000 vulnerable people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory with 650 climate-resilient agricultural assets to improve their immediate food security and nutritional needs.

### **Human rights, women, children and youth**

78. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) continued to promote the implementation of United Nations international human rights standards in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and advocated for their integration into the national legal system. OHCHR developed the capacity of the national human rights institution and civil society organizations to engage with United Nations treaty body mechanisms in order to strengthen their monitoring, parallel reporting and follow-up of the implementation of treaty body recommendations by the Government of Palestine.

79. OHCHR, in cooperation with the Central Elections Commission, organized activities on the participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities in elections from a human rights perspective.

80. UNICEF continued to support the strengthening of comprehensive child protection systems, including the launch of the national intersectoral strategy on violence against children.

81. UNICEF supported 30,500 children with child protection, mental health and psychosocial services. Of those reached, over 3,000 children accessed case management services. Structured psychosocial services reached over 30,000 caregivers.

82. UNDP, UNICEF and UN-Women provided access to legal aid services for 15,328 people. A total of 609 beneficiaries attended legal literacy awareness sessions in marginalized areas in the Gaza Strip. A total of 80 female inmates in the West Bank and Gaza accessed psychosocial support.

83. UN-Women supported the Ministry of Women's Affairs in strengthening the national action plan against gender-based violence, which included the provision of health and counselling services to women and girls, enhancing national capacity to combat gender-based violence and strengthening the national referral system.

84. UN-Women supported the development of a hotline to provide support to women, children and family members in need, including counselling and legal assistance. In addition, it supported the establishment of the first e-service for the automation of alimony payments.

85. UNFPA continued to support youth-friendly health services in Palestinian universities, benefiting 42,379 young people. The first Arabic language application for young people on sexual and reproductive health topics was launched and a helpline was established to provide mental health and psychosocial support for young people.

86. In the West Bank, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) supported media campaigns to raise awareness of the services available to women victims of violence, reaching 600,000 views.

87. UNODC raised awareness of crime prevention through sports for 2,800 adolescents and young people. In addition, it trained 39 sports instructors on promoting sports as a means to prevent crime, violence and drug use, and provided 30 schools with sports equipment.

88. In Gaza, the Mine Action Service implemented a community-based resilience training initiative focusing on the empowerment of women, which reached 4,424 individuals, of whom 3,514 were women.

89. In the West Bank, UNRWA provided counselling and case management services for 239 people, 42 of whom were survivors of gender-based violence. An additional 118 cases were referred to external services. Furthermore, 662 individuals were provided with counselling sessions.

90. In Gaza, UNRWA provided mental health and psychosocial support services to 9,144 Palestine refugees and referred 1,300 Palestine refugee women to legal counsellors. School counsellors provided group counselling to 3,135 children and individual counselling to 11,900 students.

91. UNESCO conducted training sessions for journalists on election coverage, fact-checking and professional reporting. UNESCO and UN-Women released radio episodes on the role of women in the media.

92. ILO supported the Palestine General Federation of Trade Unions in forming a coalition with members of civil society and sectoral unions to advocate for improved working conditions and equal labour rights among men and women.

### **Environment, housing and urban development**

93. The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) inaugurated the rehabilitated Dar Al-Consul complex in the Old City of Jerusalem. The rehabilitation included 36 residential units, five community courtyards and a ground floor area of more than 1,200 m<sup>2</sup>.

94. In Gaza, UN-Habitat inaugurated a safe and inclusive public space for women, young people, children and persons with disabilities, equipping it with accessible facilities. Innovative tools, including a computer game, were applied to engage the local community.

95. UN-Habitat, in partnership with the Ministry of Local Government and the Land and Water Settlement Commission, supported spatial planning and the mapping of land rights for Palestinian communities in the West Bank.

96. In Gaza, UNDP initiated the development of a solar energy system at the Khan Younis wastewater treatment plant. Within this intervention, 408 women and schoolgirls participated in awareness-raising workshops on the best practices of hygiene and water-related issues.

97. UNDP continued to support the master plan for Wadi Gaza by providing technical assistance in the formulation of the joint service council of Wadi Gaza, including its functional and operational structure.

## **B. United Nations system emergency assistance**

98. An estimated 2.1 million Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory needed humanitarian assistance. Given remaining funding gaps, humanitarian agencies continued to streamline and prioritize activities to target the maximum number of vulnerable people in a highly constrained context. To that end, they had three priorities during the reporting period: protecting civilians; providing basic services and better access to resources to enhance livelihoods; and supporting vulnerable Palestinians in coping with the protracted crisis. Humanitarian agencies continued to implement measures to mitigate the negative impact of the ongoing pandemic, with a continued emphasis on supporting the most vulnerable people.

### **Emergency agriculture support**

99. FAO supported 948 fishers and crop farmers in Gaza with solar energy systems to maintain fishery production and irrigate crops, ensuring the continuous production of food. In the West Bank, FAO installed solar energy systems at post-harvest and food processing facilities and nurseries, benefiting 2,338 people, and supported the distribution of livestock inputs to 900 households.

100. In response to the escalation of hostilities in May 2021, FAO provided 4,452 herders and poultry farmers in Gaza with fodder to sustain their livelihoods.

101. UN-Habitat supported the creation of urban agricultural plots in the West Bank to strengthen livelihoods and food security for vulnerable communities affected by the pandemic, with a focus on the elderly.

### **Emergency food support**

102. UNRWA supported 1,140,793 beneficiaries with in-kind emergency food assistance in Gaza. It introduced a unified food basket in 2021 for all eligible beneficiaries, covering 50 per cent of their daily caloric needs.

103. In the West Bank, UNRWA, in partnership with WFP, provided in-kind emergency food assistance to over 38,000 members of Bedouin communities. A further 23,903 food-insecure individuals received cash assistance from UNRWA. In addition, it ensured critical support for families in quarantine and isolated communities by providing food parcels to 22,456 individuals.

104. WFP provided food assistance to 478,431 people through electronic vouchers, multi-purpose cash assistance and in-kind food parcels to improve the nutrition and well-being of severely food-insecure and vulnerable Palestinians. This also included the scaling-up of temporary emergency electronic food voucher assistance following the escalation in May 2021.

105. In response to the escalation, WFP provided ready-to-eat food items to 318 internally displaced people residing at two UNRWA-designated emergency shelters. It also provided emergency multi-purpose cash assistance for 24,000 people.

### **Emergency education support**

106. In Gaza, UNICEF facilitated safe access to school for 46,200 children with the rehabilitation of 20 schools. The rehabilitation of an additional 26 schools is ongoing. Over 74,000 vulnerable children received school materials.

107. UNICEF reached 4,300 children in 1,160 households with a child-sensitive cash transfer component, to ensure that the most vulnerable conflict-affected children are able to continue their studies and access essential services.

108. In response to the pandemic, UNRWA adopted a hybrid learning modality in its schools, employing a combination of face-to-face classroom teaching and online instruction. In the West Bank, approximately 32,200 students accessed remote learning during periods of school closures. In Gaza, face-to-face learning was resumed in August 2021.

109. Following the escalation of May 2021, 104 UNRWA schools were rehabilitated in Gaza.

### **Emergency health support**

110. WHO provided technical assistance to the Ministry of Health to strengthen the health system response to the pandemic. Activities included the establishment of

respiratory triage centres and quarantine, isolation and treatment facilities; and the implementation of good practices for disease surveillance, contact tracing, laboratory diagnosis, infection prevention and control, clinical management of critical cases, and respiratory triage through the training of front-line workers and the provision of the latest evidence-based guidance.

111. WHO responded to the escalation in May 2021 by providing immediate trauma and first aid supplies to address the urgent need for essential medical supplies.

112. WHO continued to support pre-hospital response services, emergency departments, acute surgical capacities and the provision of limb-saving and limb reconstruction surgery and treatment, responding to long-term needs from injuries sustained during demonstrations of the Great March of Return in Gaza in 2018–2019 and the escalation in May 2021.

113. WHO and UNICEF provided support to the Ministry of Health on supplementary immunization activities when cases of polio were detected in neighbouring Israel.

114. UNICEF provided over 55,000 children and adolescents with recreational activities to support mental health and well-being. Around 56,000 people in Gaza and the West Bank, including the most vulnerable pregnant and lactating women and children under five, benefited from essential life-saving services.

115. In Gaza, UNRWA provided secondary or tertiary care to 9,684 patients, and an additional 4,700 patients were provided with life-saving medicines.

116. In the West Bank, UNRWA resumed all in-person services at its health centres and expanded its mobile health services to five additional remote communities in Area C, providing health access to 54,253 individuals.

117. UNFPA provided access to essential primary health-care services through mobile clinics to an estimated 24,165 people living in Area C of the West Bank.

118. UNFPA, in cooperation with UNICEF and WHO, continued to enhance the skills of 1,366 governmental, non-governmental and UNRWA health professionals in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip on life-saving sexual and reproductive health services.

119. UNDP upgraded the medical waste management system in Gaza by constructing a new medical waste management facility, supplied six hospitals and health facilities with essential equipment, conducted training for 5,136 health workers and deployed 1,388 health workers in 121 hospitals.

120. UN-Women strengthened access for vulnerable groups of women to quality multisectoral protection services, including legal aid, psychosocial counselling, health and reproductive health services, awareness-raising on COVID-19 protective measures and gender-based violence services.

### **Emergency housing support**

121. UNOPS continued its support for the reconstruction and repair of houses in Gaza. A total of 1,199 houses were repaired in 2021.

122. In 2021, UNRWA rehabilitated nine substandard shelters in Gaza. Following the escalation in May 2021, 1,292 houses were categorized as totally demolished and in need of reconstruction. The reconstruction was planned to start in April 2022 upon completion of the verification of the caseload and damage assessment.

123. UNRWA provided cash assistance for shelter repair to 6,970 families whose shelters were partially damaged during the escalation in May 2021.



124. In the West Bank, UNRWA provided cash assistance to 259 individuals following the demolition of their homes by the Israeli authorities. Furthermore, 2,785 individuals received cash assistance and referrals to meet their humanitarian needs caused by search and arrest operations by Israeli security forces in Palestine refugee camps.

125. In Gaza, following the escalation of May 2021, UNDP supported rubble removal and reconstruction activities, which led to the rehabilitation of 223 damaged housing units, allowing 1,269 internally displaced people to return home. In addition, 1,998 internally displaced people received transitional shelter cash assistance.

#### **Emergency income generation**

126. From 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, UNRWA provided short-term job opportunities to 17,366 Palestine refugees in Gaza through cash-for-work interventions generating approximately 1,113,235 workdays.

127. In Gaza, UNDP provided short-term employment opportunities to 4,145 beneficiaries, including 2,205 women, and generated around 499,884 workdays.

#### **Emergency water and sanitation support**

128. UNICEF supported 800,000 affected people with improved water and sanitation services through the repair of damaged water and wastewater networks across Gaza.

129. UNRWA continued to provide basic water and sanitation services in all 8 refugee camps in Gaza and 19 refugee camps in the West Bank. In response to the pandemic, it enhanced hygiene and sanitation measures, including the hiring of about 300 cash-for-work sanitation workers in Gaza and around 90 additional workers in the West Bank.

130. UN-Habitat supported solid waste management efforts in Bethlehem Governorate to ensure continuity of the provision of these basic services amid the pandemic, reaching over 60,000 Palestinians.

### **C. United Nations system support to Palestinian institutions**

131. UNDP partnered with civil society organizations to train and deploy local observers in 371 localities during the municipal elections in the West Bank. It introduced nationally broadcast candidate debates in partnership with media organizations.

132. UNDP handed over the newly constructed Hebron courthouse to the High Judicial Council, as well as the Public Prosecutors Building, which will serve over 359,000 citizens in Hebron Governorate.

133. WFP continued to support the Ministry of Social Development in reforming the national social protection system.

134. WFP, ILO and UNICEF continued to support the capacity strengthening of national systems to include persons with disabilities and older persons.

135. FAO continued to provide technical support to the Ministry of Agriculture to set up a governance system for the national food and nutrition security policy and the national investment plan for food.

136. UNODC continued to support the forensic science laboratory of the Palestinian police and improved the capacity for examining biological evidence in cases of sexual and gender-based violence. In addition, it supported the Anti-Narcotics Administration and correction and rehabilitation centres.

137. UNODC continued to provide technical assistance to the national programme on drug control, crime prevention and criminal justice and supported the revision of a draft law to combat human trafficking in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

138. UNFPA supported the establishment of a new Adolescent Health Unit at the Palestinian Ministry of Health and the update of the national adolescent and youth health strategy to include mental health and psychosocial support and nutrition. UNFPA undertook life-skills and sexual and reproductive health and rights training for teachers, counsellors and 23 out-of-school young people, including some living with disabilities.

139. ILO supported the Ministry of Labour and partners in holding the first tripartite social dialogue conference to address the implications of the pandemic on the labour market and reinforce social dialogue mechanisms.

140. OHCHR worked on promoting the human rights-based approach in planning, programming and data collection through training sessions for the Government of Palestine.

#### **D. Private sector development**

141. In 2021, UNRWA provided 3,851 microfinance loans worth \$4.16 million to Palestine clients in Gaza. In the West Bank, it delivered 7,016 loans, valued at \$11 million.

142. ILO supported the strengthening of the Cooperative Work Agency, facilitating the revision of the cooperative legal framework, which resulted in the submission of a new draft law and key by-laws. It also supported capacity-building workshops for Agency staff.

143. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization supported the first acceleration programme to promote clean technology industry innovation. Some 30 start-ups completed the programme and 385 beneficiaries were trained in energy efficiency optimization.

#### **E. Coordination of United Nations assistance**

144. Collaboration and coordination between donors and United Nations entities continued under the auspices of the Deputy Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, United Nations Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The humanitarian country team met regularly to agree on humanitarian advocacy and response measures. The United Nations country team continued to coordinate its development programming with the priorities outlined in the Palestinian National Policy Agenda for the period 2017–2022.

### **IV. Donor response to the crisis**

#### **Budgetary and fiscal support**

145. The fiscal condition of the Palestinian Authority remained extremely precarious. Its clearance revenues were transferred routinely throughout the reporting period, which was not the case during the previous two reporting periods. Revenue collections also improved compared with the initial pandemic-related economic downturn. Nonetheless, revenues were insufficient to cover expenditure, which continued to grow. Adequate direct budget support from donors was not forthcoming.

These factors together made it increasingly difficult for the Palestinian Authority to cover its minimum recurrent expenditure and make critical investments in the economy and for the Palestinian people.

146. Apart from direct budget support to the Palestinian Authority, overall donor support to Palestinians has improved since the previous reporting period, due in part to the resumption of support for UNRWA by the United States of America. Nevertheless, donor support to Palestinians remains far below historical averages.

#### **Donor coordination**

147. The local aid coordination structure continued as the main forum for government-led coordination of donor-funded development interventions in around 15 sectors.

148. The Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians held one meeting during the reporting period, in November 2021, and convened a virtual technical expert meeting at the senior official level in July 2021, in the aftermath of the escalation of the conflict in May 2021. The Committee maintained its strong support for urgent humanitarian and economic interventions and for the pandemic response. Donor support contributed to reconstruction in Gaza after the escalation and to the impetus for larger scale development projects. Fuel supplies funded by Qatar for the power plant in Gaza stabilized the electricity supply to Gaza at an average of 12 hours per day in 2021, and cash assistance was provided for around 95,000 vulnerable families in Gaza. Important progress was also made in the construction of critical water and sanitation facilities.

## **V. Unmet needs**

149. The severity of the humanitarian crisis facing the Occupied Palestinian Territory is reflected in the funding requested in the 2022 Humanitarian Response Plan and in the number of people targeted. Humanitarian partners are appealing for \$510 million, significantly more than the \$417 million sought in 2021. By March 2022, 89 per cent of the funds requested for the 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan had been raised. As at 31 March 2022, approximately 16 per cent of the 2022 Humanitarian Response Plan was funded.

150. Following the escalation in May 2021, international contributions to post-conflict reconstruction and recovery in Gaza have been occurring in an ad hoc manner. One year after the end of the conflict, the 2022 Humanitarian Response Plan still identifies \$33 million in unmet early recovery needs out of a total of \$95 million.

151. Severe financial challenges continued to constrain UNRWA operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. In 2021, the Agency's financial shortfall significantly worsened with the deteriorating security and humanitarian situation as well as the escalation in May. Owing to the funding crisis, critical operations could only be maintained through advances from the UNRWA programme budget, which continues to be chronically underfunded. The Agency's 2022 emergency appeal for the Occupied Palestinian Territory is currently only 15 per cent funded. There are insufficient financial resources for UNRWA to maintain its job creation programme and food aid until the end of 2022, the food basket accounting for nearly 60 per cent of the food supply in Gaza. In the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, the Agency's financial resources are insufficient to continue to meet the critical health, education and water, sanitation and hygiene needs of Palestine refugees.

## VI. Challenges

152. The continued absence of a political process to end the occupation and achieve a viable two-State solution continues to be the largest impediment to Palestinian development. Israeli settlement expansion, demolitions, evictions, closures, access and movement restrictions and other aspects of the protracted military occupation continue to have a severe impact on the humanitarian, social and political life of Palestinians and their ability to exercise their fundamental human rights. Violence and incitement continue to perpetuate mutual fear and suspicion. The internal Palestinian political division also places formidable obstacles to addressing humanitarian needs and restoring a political horizon.

153. The economic recovery from the 2020 crisis has been incomplete and partial: economic productivity has not returned to pre-pandemic levels, and unemployment and poverty are unacceptably high, in particular in the Gaza Strip. With respect to the fiscal situation, the Palestinian Authority's revenues have improved in recent months and expenditure has continued to grow, but adequate budget support from donors has not been forthcoming and most key fiscal reforms remain pending. These factors, together with decreasing funding to the Occupied Palestinian Territory and to the United Nations, pose a further challenge to the provision of development and humanitarian assistance.

## VII. Conclusions

154. The operational context for the work of the United Nations during the reporting period was increasingly difficult because of the challenges outlined in the present report. The United Nations will continue to work towards the realization of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#), [338 \(1973\)](#), [1397 \(2002\)](#), [1515 \(2003\)](#), [1850 \(2008\)](#), [1860 \(2009\)](#) and [2334 \(2016\)](#), an end to the occupation that began in 1967 and the establishment of an independent, sovereign, democratic, viable and contiguous Palestinian State, existing side by side in peace within secure and recognized borders.

155. It is only by realizing the vision of two States living side by side in peace, security and mutual recognition, with Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and the State of Palestine, and all final status issues resolved permanently through negotiations, that the legitimate aspirations of both peoples will be achieved.



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**Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance to the United Nations, including special economic assistance**

## Economic and Social Council 2023 session

25 July 2022–26 July 2023

Agenda item 14

**Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations**

## Assistance to the Palestinian People

### Report of the Secretary-General

#### *Summary*

The present report, submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution [77/30](#), contains an assessment of the assistance received by the Palestinian people and proposals for responding to unmet needs. It provides a description of the efforts made by the United Nations, in cooperation with the Government of the State of Palestine, donors and civil society, to support Palestinian people and institutions.

The reporting period (1 April 2022–31 March 2023) was characterized by continued tensions and violence and the persistence of negative trends, further impeding the resumption of meaningful negotiations and the achievement of a viable two-State solution and adversely affecting prospects for peace. The year 2022 was the deadliest year for Palestinians in the West Bank since 2005 and for Israelis since 2015, and the death toll continued to increase in the first three months of 2023. In Gaza, a three-day escalation in August 2022 resulted in 51 Palestinian fatalities, including at least 37 civilians.

In addition, throughout the reporting period, the dire fiscal condition of the Palestinian Authority had a negative effect on its the ability to deliver basic services.

During the reporting period, the United Nations continued to coordinate and deliver humanitarian and development assistance to Palestinians and the Palestinian Authority. The United Nations system raised a total of \$405.6 million for the 2022 Humanitarian Response Plan for the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Overall, \$531 million in humanitarian assistance was delivered by the United Nations and its partners. Some of that assistance was targeted at Palestinian communities in areas not

\* [A/78/50](#).



under the direct administration of the Palestinian Authority, including East Jerusalem and Area C, in the occupied West Bank, and Gaza.

Under the 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, \$502 million is needed to provide basic food, protection, health care, shelter, water and sanitation to 1.6 million Palestinians who have been identified as those most in need of humanitarian interventions across the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

## I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 77/30, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it, at its seventy-eighth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution, containing an assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people, as well as an assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them. The reporting period is from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.
2. Information on the political and socioeconomic situation of the Occupied Palestinian Territory is provided in several periodic reports prepared by United Nations entities and submitted to various United Nations bodies, including the monthly Security Council briefings by the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process; the reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 2334 (2016); the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan; the annual report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA); and the biannual reports of the Office of the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians.
3. The humanitarian, economic and development needs of the Palestinian people are reflected in several complementary strategic and resource mobilization documents. The 2022 Humanitarian Response Plan received \$405.6 million, or 79.5 per cent, of the \$510 million requested. Overall, \$531 million was delivered in humanitarian assistance to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including \$136 million funded outside the 2022 Humanitarian Response Plan.
4. While the overall number of people in need has remained relatively constant since the end of 2021 at approximately 2.1 million, the severity and depth of their needs have increased. One quarter of all households were identified as being in severe, extreme or catastrophic conditions in the 2023 humanitarian needs overview, an increase of 20 per cent since 2022. In Gaza, the situation is more acute, with 29 per cent of households falling into the two highest tiers of severity of need, compared with 10 per cent in 2022. Under the 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan, \$502 million is sought to provide basic food, protection, health care, shelter, water and sanitation to 1.6 million Palestinians who have been identified as the most vulnerable. The outlook for 2023 remains uncertain given increasing violence, political developments and the lack of progress towards a resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
5. During the reporting period, the United Nations in the State of Palestine developed and finalized a United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for the State of Palestine. The collective vision and response of the United Nations in support of Palestinian national development priorities for the period 2023–2025 is set out in that document, which was signed with the Palestinian Authority in December 2022.
6. Throughout the reporting period, the Office of the Special Coordinator continued its efforts to support conflict prevention and a return to peace negotiations, and to promote coordination among the Government of the State of Palestine, the United Nations, the international community and the Government of Israel.

## II. Overview of the current situation

### A. Political context

7. The reporting period saw the continuation of several overarching negative trends, including the continued absence of a political process to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the further entrenchment of the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory, a significant increase in violence and indiscriminate and targeted attacks against civilians on both sides, ongoing settlement activities, demolitions and seizures of Palestinian-owned structures, limited progress on advancing intra-Palestinian unity and the worsening of the financial crisis facing the Palestinian Authority.

8. During the reporting period, violence escalated significantly in Israel and throughout the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, amid an increase in militant activity and the proliferation of small arms. While 2022 was the deadliest year for Palestinians in the occupied West Bank since 2005 and for Israelis since 2015, the first three months of 2023 continued to see increasing violence with high numbers of fatalities. Following a series of deadly attacks in Israel in March and April 2022, Israel conducted successive military operations in Area A of the occupied West Bank during the reporting period. Many of those operations resulted in clashes and armed exchanges with Palestinians, with high numbers of Palestinian casualties. Palestinian attacks against Israeli civilians in the occupied West Bank and in Israel and violent attacks, vandalism and damage to property perpetrated by Israeli settlers and other civilians against Palestinians both increased.

9. Israeli settlement expansion continued throughout the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem. During the reporting period, Israeli authorities advanced plans for some 12,300 housing units in settlements in Area C and 1,100 units in East Jerusalem, while tenders were announced for some 940 units in Area C and 90 in East Jerusalem. On 15 February 2023, the Security Cabinet of Israel authorized the retroactive legalization, under Israeli law, of nine outposts throughout the occupied West Bank. On 21 March, the Knesset passed legislation repealing parts of the Disengagement Plan Implementation Law of 2005, thereby enabling Israelis to enter the areas of four evacuated settlements, including the Homesh outpost, in the northern West Bank and potentially acquire rights to the land within those sites under Israeli law.

10. In Gaza, a three-day escalation in August 2022 resulted in the death of 51 Palestinians, of whom at least 37 were civilians, including 4 women and 14 girls, and the injury of 383 other Palestinians, including 67 women and 61 girls. Dozens of Israelis were also injured as a result of the hostilities. Notwithstanding this brief escalation, the May 2021 ceasefire in Gaza, including key stabilizing measures, continued to hold but remained fragile. Despite some easing of restrictions on the movement of people and goods during the reporting period, the closure regime imposed by Israel on the Gaza Strip since the 2007 violent Hamas takeover, combined with the absence of progress on Palestinian unity and ongoing militant activity in the Strip, continued to generate humanitarian needs and significantly hamper economic growth.

11. Despite those challenges, some positive developments occurred during the reporting period. High-level dialogue between senior Palestinian and Israeli officials continued, in particular on civil and economic issues, and some limited progress was made in that regard. Following meetings in Aqaba, Jordan, on 26 February, representatives of Israel and the Palestinian Authority, as well as representatives of Egypt, Jordan and the United States of America, issued a joint communiqué reaffirming their commitment to previous agreements and working towards a just and



lasting peace. The parties also committed to take steps to de-escalate the situation on the ground, pause unilateral measures and prevent further violence, including through upholding the status quo at the holy sites in Jerusalem. On 19 March, at a follow-up meeting in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, participants affirmed the legal right of the Palestinian Authority to carry out security operations in Area A of the West Bank in accordance with existing agreements, and Israel and the Palestinian Authority agreed to establish mechanisms to curb violence and incitement and to improve the economic conditions of the Palestinian people.

12. On 23 June 2022, the Palestine Liberation Organization formally appointed Husayn al-Shaykh as Secretary-General of its Executive Committee, following his election by the Palestinian Central Council to the Executive Committee in February 2022. In November, a coalition of Palestinian political and civil society activists launched a series of protests and meetings under the slogan “Palestinian Popular Conference – 14 million”, demanding reform of the Palestine Liberation Organization and elections for its legislative body, the Palestinian National Council. In Ramallah, the Palestinian Authority prevented a planned Popular Conference meeting from being held and arrested two of its organizers, both of whom were released without charge.

13. On 13 October 2022, following an inter-factional dialogue hosted by the Government of Algeria, 14 Palestinian factions, including Fatah and Hamas, signed the Algiers Declaration, in which they agreed, inter alia, to “resolve differences in the Palestinian arena with the aim of full national affiliation with the Palestine Liberation Organization as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people”. The participants also called for the long-delayed presidential and legislative elections to be held in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, “within a period not to exceed one year from the date of signature”.

14. Throughout the reporting period, the United Nations and its regional and international partners continued to mediate and de-escalate tensions and to urge Israelis and Palestinians to take concrete actions to restore a political horizon in order to end the occupation and achieve a viable two-State solution. The Special Coordinator continued bilateral engagements with envoys of the Middle East Quartet and other regional and international partners to promote constructive diplomatic engagement and encourage progress towards a negotiated two-State solution.

## **B. Humanitarian and socioeconomic context**

### **Economic and fiscal developments**

15. In the reporting period, the economic and fiscal situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory remained dire. The Palestinian economy has not recovered from the impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, which was one of the factors that caused gross domestic product (GDP) to decline by 11 per cent in the West Bank and 13 per cent in the Gaza Strip in 2020, and allowed GDP to grow only modestly in 2021 and 2022. GDP growth was further constrained by ongoing restrictions imposed by the Government of Israel on movement and access across the Occupied Palestinian Territory, in particular in Gaza, and by Palestinians’ inability to develop and invest in Area C. Constrained economic growth is the most significant cause of the precarious fiscal condition of the Palestinian Authority. The lack of critical governance reforms by the Palestinian Authority has also contributed to the ongoing economic and fiscal challenges.

16. The overall unemployment rate in the Occupied Palestinian Territory was 24 per cent in 2022 (13 per cent in the West Bank and 45 per cent in Gaza). The participation of women in the labour force remained among the lowest in the world, at 18.6 per

cent. Youth unemployment remained high with stark geographical differences: 73.9 per cent in Gaza and 28.6 per cent in the West Bank.

17. Challenges related to the protracted Israeli occupation continued to have a detrimental effect on the capacity of the Palestinian economy to generate enough jobs to meet population growth which, in turn, drives the high unemployment rates. These challenges included restrictions on the movement of goods and people, constraints on foreign trade, restrictions on Palestinian access to key productive resources in Area C, which represents 60 per cent of the total area of the West Bank, and the deductions made by Israel from customs revenue that it collects on behalf of the Palestinian Authority.

18. During the reporting period, Israel eased some access and movement restrictions, in particular on Palestinian labourers working in Israel. By January 2023, 16,930 “economic needs” permits and 1,059 “worker” permits had been issued for Palestinian labourers from the Gaza Strip. Overall, more than 200,000 Palestinians, mostly male labourers, are working in Israel, representing nearly 20 per cent of the Palestinian workforce and collecting nearly 30 per cent of all wages earned by Palestinians.

19. In 2022, the Government of Israel once again permitted agricultural producers in Israel to import agricultural produce from the Gaza Strip. As a result of relaxations in agricultural export quotas, implemented at least in part because of the observance in Israel of the Jewish “shmita” year, during which land must lie fallow, agricultural exports from the Gaza Strip to Israel increased by 700 per cent in 2022 (1,096 truckloads of agricultural products) compared with 2021 (137 truckloads of agricultural products), when exports were severely restricted following the escalation in May of 2021. The net benefit of increased agricultural exports to the economy of the Gaza Strip in 2022 was \$56 million.

### **Humanitarian developments**

20. As of January 2023, some 2.1 million Palestinians were in need of humanitarian assistance. Of that number, an estimated 1.5 million Palestinians, 31 per cent of whom belonged to female-headed households, were food-insecure. Protracted conflict, economic stagnation, restricted trade and lack of access to resources, coupled with high unemployment and poverty rates, continued to pose serious challenges to food security and nutrition, especially for pregnant and lactating women and children. The combined effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the conflict in Ukraine, chronic inhibitors to development and periodic escalations of conflict contributed to an erosion in the purchasing power of Palestinians and disruptions in access to food and other essential items.

21. Protection concerns remain central to humanitarian operations. In the reporting period, a total of 274 Palestinians, including 65 children, were killed in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Israel, including 51 Palestinians killed during the 2022 August escalation in Gaza, at least 37 of whom were civilians. A total of 10,278 Palestinians were injured during the reporting period in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including 1,008 children and 334 women injured by Israeli forces. Of that number, 1,029 were injured by live ammunition, 1,296 by rubber bullets and 7,129 by tear gas inhalation requiring medical treatment. The number of Palestinian fatalities in the West Bank in 2022 was the highest since the United Nations started systematically counting fatalities in 2005. A total of 212 Palestinians, including 6 women and 46 children, were killed and another 10,112 Palestinians, including 960 children, were injured by Israeli forces in the occupied West Bank during the reporting period. Those figures represent a 121 per cent increase in the number of Palestinians killed in the West Bank and a 45 per cent decrease in the number of Palestinian injured. By contrast, 96 deaths and 18,404 injuries were reported in the

West Bank during the previous reporting period. Some five Palestinians were killed by Israeli settlers and 337 were injured. On the other hand, 33 Israelis were killed in the occupied West Bank and Israel, including 4 children, 2 women and 4 soldiers. One foreign national was also killed. Those numbers represent a 136 per cent increase compared with the previous reporting period, and they are the highest since 2015. A total of 257 Israelis were injured, including 17 women and 11 children.

22. The demolition and seizure of Palestinian residential, livelihood and service infrastructure in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, continued. Citing the absence of Israeli-issued building permits, which are almost impossible for Palestinians to obtain, the Israeli authorities seized, demolished or forced the demolition of 995 Palestinian structures, of which 149 were funded by donors, across the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. As a result, a total of 1,053 Palestinians, including 540 children, were displaced, representing a 23 and 14 per cent increase, respectively, compared with the previous reporting period.

23. During the reporting period, an additional 17 Palestinian-owned structures were demolished on punitive grounds, while 5 had been demolished in the previous reporting period.

### **Movement, humanitarian access and operational space**

24. Humanitarian operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory continued to be hampered by the imposition by Israel of physical obstacles (such as the barrier, checkpoints, roadblocks and gates), administrative barriers (such as the building permit regime), restrictions on movement and access of personnel, and restrictions on movement of goods into and out of Gaza. These restrictions affected access to East Jerusalem and other areas between the barrier and the Green Line. Restrictions on Palestinian access to land and resources, in particular in Area C, also continued to be a concern.

25. A total of 488,841 people departed from Gaza through the Erez crossing, almost three times more than the 169,721 who had departed during the previous reporting period, although significantly less than the 500,000 Palestinians who were crossing each month in 2000. Similarly, the Rafah crossing recorded about 153,634 exits throughout the reporting period, a 33 per cent increase from the 115,606 recorded during the previous reporting period.

26. Kerem Shalom remained the primary crossing for the movement of commodities to Gaza from Israel and from Gaza into Israel or the West Bank. Excluding fuel, on average, some 6,012 truckloads of goods entered Gaza per month during the reporting period. An average of 465 trucks per month exited Gaza, most of them headed to West Bank markets.

27. The fishing zone off the Gaza coast largely remained at 15 nautical miles in the south, 12 nautical miles in the middle area and 6 nautical miles in the north during the reporting period. In addition to those limits, Israel, citing security concerns, imposed other restrictions on fishing activities.

### **Barrier**

28. The United Nations Register of Damage Caused by the Construction of the Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, established pursuant to General Assembly resolution [ES-10/17](#), continued its outreach and claim intake activities to “serve as a record, in documentary form, of the damage caused to all natural and legal persons concerned as a result of the construction of the wall by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem”. Since the establishment of the Register of Damage in December 2007, more than 73,200

claims and over 1.5 million supporting documents have been collected in all nine governorates and in 269 of the 271 Palestinian communities affected by the constructed section of the wall.

### **III. United Nations response**

#### **A. Human and social development**

29. The United Nations continued to coordinate and deliver humanitarian and development assistance in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Some of that assistance was targeted at Palestinian individuals and communities in areas beyond the reach of the Palestinian Authority, including East Jerusalem and Area C in the occupied West Bank, and Gaza. The United Nations focused its efforts on the most vulnerable segments of the population.

##### **Education**

30. During the 2022/23 school year, UNRWA provided primary education to 294,086 students (142,374 girls and 151,712 boys) in 284 elementary and preparatory schools in Gaza and also to 46,024 students (27,812 girls and 18,212 boys) in 96 elementary and preparatory schools in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

31. During the 2022/23 school year, UNRWA provided technical and vocational education and training to over 1,865 students (1,213 male and 652 female) in Gaza and 1,057 (442 male and 615 female) in the West Bank. In addition, 658 students (93 male and 565 female) were enrolled in the Agency's Education Science Faculty for teacher training in the West Bank.

32. In Gaza, the Agency constructed one new school and built additional school blocks at two existing schools. In the West Bank, two new schools were under construction, while 11 schools were rehabilitated as part of routine maintenance.

33. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) supported the Ministry of Education to improve access to quality, safe and inclusive learning opportunities, and to develop a costed science, technology, engineering and mathematics strategy.

34. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) supported improved access to quality education for over 10,500 students in East Jerusalem schools. UNDP upgraded several schools and established a digital human resources management system benefiting 1,899 students and 55,000 Ministry of Education employees.

35. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) provided training on coding, robotics, artificial intelligence and other technical subjects to 121 teachers, of whom 74 were women, and 1,181 students, of whom 802 were girls.

36. UNESCO conducted Arabic and mathematics learning activities using art, music, storytelling and sports for 19,000 students, including 9,900 girls, in 190 schools and provided training on inclusive education for 2,530 teachers, of whom 1,695 were women.

37. UNESCO established three youth-led technical and vocational education and training innovation hubs in Bethlehem (tourism), Nablus (fashion design) and the Gaza Strip (information and communications technology) benefiting 405 youth, of whom were 276 women or girls.

38. In Gaza, the Mine Action Service trained over 28,500 persons at risk of being harmed by explosive remnants of war. Approximately 1 million people were reached

by a risk education social media and radio campaign. The Service continued to support the explosive ordnance disposal requirements of all United Nations school facilities in Gaza, and it declared 16 deep-buried bomb sites in Gaza as being clear.

## **Health**

39. The World Health Organization (WHO) continued to promote universal health coverage and the right to health by strengthening the health system, as well as monitoring barriers to health-care access and attacks against health care, and by engaging in advocacy to address policies and practices that affect the health rights of Palestinians. WHO continued to enhance health information systems, support health policy development, assess the performance of the primary health-care system, promote family practice, develop a hospital master plan and support the Ministry of Health in identifying financial risk protection in health.

40. WHO also supported the implementation of a system-strengthening approach to reduce neonatal mortality. Early essential newborn care was put in place in 5 government hospitals and 10 non-governmental maternity hospitals in Gaza.

41. In 2022, WHO and UNICEF continued to support the delivery of over 700,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccine, as well as syringes and safety boxes, through the Vaccine Global Access (COVAX) Facility. In response to a polio outbreak in Israel, UNICEF and WHO led risk communication efforts, reaching 57,000 parents and 400 health professionals, religious leaders and social influencers. Following a cholera outbreak and the identification of a positive environmental sample in Israel, UNICEF and WHO supported the Ministry of Health of the State of Palestine in stepping up preparedness levels.

42. In Gaza, UNRWA conducted approximately 3.2 million face-to-face primary health-care patient consultations at its 22 health-care facilities and about 350,000 telemedicine consultations. In the West Bank, the Agency provided 801,529 consultations at its 43 health-care facilities.

43. UNRWA provided about 15,000 Palestinian refugees in Gaza with secondary and tertiary health-care subsidies, and it continued to prioritize care for the 108,578 patients in Gaza with non-communicable diseases.

44. In partnership with WHO and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UNICEF supported the Ministry of Health in scaling up a comprehensive package of sexual, reproductive, maternal, neonatal and child health-care services benefiting 4,000 women and 28,158 children, including 7,400 newborns, in the West Bank, and some 8,000 women and 27,600 children, including 8,400 newborns, in Gaza.

45. UNICEF provided technical support to strengthen early childhood development systems benefiting about 4,100 children in the West Bank and 3,200 children in Gaza.

46. UNFPA supported the training of 646 midwives and doctors (536 women and 101 men) from governmental and non-governmental primary health-care centres and hospitals.

47. UNFPA continued to support the provision of youth-friendly health services in five Palestinian universities and through mobile clinics, reaching 48,390 young persons, while also integrating digital technology to reach youths through a mobile application and a helpline.

48. UNDP supported the establishment of eight local hospital boards and the introduction of a digital patient care evaluation system in 10 government hospitals in the West Bank to strengthen efficient, transparent and accountable essential health services.

49. In Gaza, UNDP expanded the medical waste treatment facility and provided an electricity connection available around the clock for treating pharmaceutical and chemotherapy waste. A digital medical waste and infection surveillance system was established in the Ministry of Health.

50. The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) supported the renovation of two health facilities in the West Bank. In Gaza, UNOPS provided mental health and psychosocial support to 85 beneficiaries who had lost their shelters and suffered trauma following the May 2021 escalation.

51. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) trained 127 health professionals to better respond to the needs of people who use drugs and of their families.

### **Water and sanitation**

52. UNICEF supported over 451,300 Palestinian children and their families with activities related to safe access to water, sanitation and hygiene services.

53. In Gaza, UNICEF continued the expansion of the seawater desalination plant. Stormwater drainage systems were completed, reaching 10,000 residents in areas that have to contend with recurrent seasonal flooding.

54. In the West Bank, UNICEF supported the rehabilitation and extension of water networks, giving 45,400 people access to water, sanitation and hygiene services. In Yatta municipality, work started on the water network in order to provide over 100,000 people with access to safe drinking water.

55. In the West Bank, UNDP supported the Palestinian Water Authority in regulating and improving transboundary wastewater management, supporting the construction of 28 km of wastewater collection system piping and providing 8,200 persons with access to environmentally sound municipal wastewater services.

56. In Gaza, UNDP installed a 1,306-kW solar energy system at the Khan Yunis wastewater treatment plant to address the facility's chronic energy shortage.

57. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) supported 82 herders with conditional grants and technical support for water cistern rehabilitation in six locations in the West Bank.

58. The Mine Action Service conducted explosive remnants of war risk assessments for projects on water, solar panel installation and gas for Gaza, covering a total area of 861,250 m<sup>2</sup>.

### **Employment**

59. UNDP contributed to creating 5,902 short-term job opportunities for skilled and unskilled workers, of whom 36.3 per cent were women. In addition, UNDP created employment opportunities for 247 new graduates, including 122 women, under the Dynamic Futures Scholarship Programme, and supported the training of 126 youth in information and communications technology skills in order to promote access to "e-jobs".

60. UNDP provided access to technical, managerial, digital, financial and legal services for 1,474 micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, with a special focus on women-led businesses.

61. The International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Ministry of Labour co-hosted a partners' meeting to mobilize international support for the Palestinian national employment strategy. The meeting supported the mobilization of approximately \$40.7 million.

62. ILO helped to restart dialogue among stakeholders aimed at reviewing and amending the Palestinian Social Security Law. As a result of that dialogue, a revised draft law was finalized in October 2022.

63. ILO supported improving working conditions for 7,658 workers by facilitating four collective bargaining agreements between trade unions and private sector employers.

64. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) supported eight public and private sector institutions in developing gender-responsive action plans, policies, procedures and fiscal stimulus packages, and in providing equal opportunities for women to have access to decent work opportunities.

65. FAO channelled co-investment support to 162 agribusinesses with a value of \$4.9 million, stimulating additional investments amounting to approximately \$4 million.

### **Targeted social protection**

66. In Gaza, UNRWA continued to provide quarterly food baskets to over 1.14 million refugees. Another 36,129 beneficiaries in the West Bank were assisted through cash-based transfers.

67. The World Food Programme (WFP) directly assisted around 350,000 Palestinians with monthly food assistance. In Gaza, WFP indirectly assisted more than 600,000 people through its cash-based transfer platform, which covers Gaza and the West Bank. Overall, the Programme injected \$12 million every month into the Palestinian economy, through direct assistance and on partners' behalf. WFP completed a pilot cash project that reached 13,756 people in households with persons with disabilities in Hebron.

68. WFP provided in-kind food assistance to around 35,000 people of the Bedouin communities in the West Bank who face protection challenges, with 60 per cent of the food basket purchased locally.

69. UNFPA provided cash assistance to 1,983 vulnerable women and women at risk of gender-based violence.

70. UNFPA supported 14 women-led organizations in enhancing their capacities to implement gender-based violence risk mitigation, prevention and response interventions.

71. UNICEF supported 4,500 children in 1,168 households with a child-sensitive humanitarian cash transfer to enhance access to basic needs and essential services.

### **Culture**

72. UNESCO initiated a project for the conservation and management of the Tall al-Sultan archaeological site in Jericho and contributed to the emergency protection of the newly discovered mosaics floor in Burayj, in Gaza.

73. Through its Heritage Emergency Fund, UNESCO contributed to the rehabilitation of the Wahidi house, a historic building in the old city of Gaza.

### **Food security and agriculture**

74. FAO established and upgraded the post-harvest facilities of eight farmers' cooperatives and five women's cooperatives by providing post-harvest equipment and cold storage capacities. That initiative included establishing a high-capacity

post-harvest facility in Qalqilyah operated jointly by the Palestinian Agricultural Cooperatives Union and the Qalqilyah farmers' cooperative.

75. FAO supported the establishment of one farmers' market for the Palestinian Agricultural Cooperatives Union in the West Bank that serves 120 cooperatives.

76. WFP provided 543 new climate-resilient agricultural assets to households, prioritizing women-headed households, and provided maintenance support for the 650 assets that it had provided during the previous reporting period.

77. UNOPS supported the construction of five sheds to ensure the protection of food items and goods on the Palestinian side of the Kerem Shalom commercial crossing.

### **Human rights, women, children and youth**

78. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) continued to promote the implementation of United Nations international human rights standards in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and advocated for their integration into the national legal system. OHCHR developed the capacity of the Palestinian national human rights institution and civil society organizations to engage with United Nations treaty body mechanisms in order to strengthen their monitoring, reporting and follow-up of the implementation of treaty body recommendations by the Government of the State of Palestine.

79. OHCHR conducted 46 workshops on human rights, reaching over 1,000 participants, including over 500 women. OHCHR led capacity-building activities with over 100 women human rights defenders, fostering an understanding of international human rights standards.

80. OHCHR continued to work on the rights of persons with disabilities through technical assistance to government institutions, strengthening civil society engagement with human rights mechanisms and scaling up public awareness and advocacy campaigns.

81. UNICEF continued to strengthen child protection systems. In the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, 4,600 children (52 per cent boys) benefited from improved access to prevention and protection services. A further 2,700 caregivers benefited from services or awareness-raising on various topics. Family centres in Gaza provided psychosocial support services to 11,500 children, 53 per cent of whom girls, and at least 1,900 children, 54 per cent of whom were boys, with case management. Legal representation was provided to 900 children arrested in Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

82. UNDP, UNICEF and UN-Women provided access to legal aid services to 15,714 people, including 10,196 women.

83. UN-Women supported the capacity development of the Ministry of Women's Affairs and civil society to engage with the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

84. UN-Women supported 22 communities in 10 governorates with awareness-raising and knowledge-building on ending violence against women and on women's rights, reaching 150,828 persons.

85. UNFPA started developing a national youth well-being index and launched an anti-discrimination index in two Palestinian universities in the West Bank and Gaza.

86. UNFPA supported the engagement of 247 young persons in governance and decision-making processes through model United Nations conferences, local youth councils and a leadership academy for young women.



87. UNFPA designed and implemented 30 cultural and identity-related initiatives to nurture and develop Palestinian culture and heritage, reaching 4,015 young persons, including 29 youths with disabilities.
88. UNODC trained 105 professionals who work with youths on preventing drug use, violence and crime through sports and family skills, provided sports equipment to 40 schools and implemented programmes reaching 724 young people and 67 family members.
89. In Gaza, the Mine Action Service implemented a community-based resilience training programme focusing on women's empowerment, reaching 8,097 individuals, including 5,212 women.
90. In the West Bank, from 1 April until 31 December 2022, UNRWA provided counselling and case management services for 290 protection cases, 76 of which involved survivors of gender-based violence. A total of 124 cases were referred for external services.
91. In Gaza, UNRWA provided mental health and psychosocial support services to 25,453 Palestine refugees and referred 1,650 Palestine refugee women to legal counsellors. School counsellors provided group counselling to 10,893 children and individual counselling to 10,131 students.
92. ILO supported the Government of the State of Palestine in establishing a national committee for pay equity that will propose measures to address the gender pay gap.
93. ILO supported Birzeit University, in the occupied West Bank, in establishing an observatory for gender and social justice to strengthen the capacity of 14,743 students, faculty members and staff on gender-based violence at work and forms of discrimination and practices.

#### **Environment, housing and urban development**

94. The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), in partnership with the Ministry of Local Government and the Land and Water Settlement Commission, continued to support spatial planning and mapping of land rights for Palestinian communities in the West Bank.
95. UNDP continued to support the master plan for Wadi Gaza. As a result, about 60 per cent of the natural reserve is now free of solid waste.
96. Also in Gaza, UNDP supported the transition to renewable energy through the installation of solar energy equipment capable of generating 1,414 kW of electricity, thereby preventing the emission of 1,015.7 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>.
97. Energy efficiency and renewable energy interventions in industrial enterprises carried out by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) contributed to an annual reduction of 12,276 tons in CO<sub>2</sub> emission and 7,911 MWh in annual energy savings.
98. UNOPS supported the construction of a central pretreatment plant in the Jericho Agro-Industrial Park for the treatment of industrial wastewater.
99. UNOPS continued to support the procurement and delivery of around 3 million litres of fuel weekly to the Gaza power plant, thereby helping to maintain the electricity supply at approximately 4 to 12 hours daily.

## **B. United Nations system emergency assistance**

100. An estimated 2.1 million Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory need humanitarian assistance. Given the limited resources available, humanitarian agencies continued to streamline and prioritize activities to target the maximum number of vulnerable people in a highly constrained context. To that end, humanitarian agencies had three priorities during the reporting period: protecting civilians, providing basic services and improved access to resources to enhance livelihoods, and supporting vulnerable Palestinians to cope with the protracted crisis.

### **Emergency agriculture support**

101. FAO supported 799 herders with agricultural inputs and cash assistance, including dairy processing tools and equipment, plastic sheds, farm tools and chicken and rabbit units to maintain and ensure continuous food production.

102. In response to the May 2021 escalations, FAO continued to provide 529 herders and poultry farmers in Gaza with fodder to sustain their livelihoods.

103. FAO trained 40 women-led micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises to build their capacity to respond to emerging market needs and the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Emergency food support**

104. UNRWA supported 1,143,688 beneficiaries through in-kind emergency food assistance in Gaza, covering 50 per cent of their daily caloric needs.

105. In the West Bank, UNRWA, in partnership with WFP, provided in-kind emergency food assistance to 38,334 members of Bedouin communities. A further 22,044 food-insecure individuals received cash assistance from UNRWA. In addition, the Agency ensured critical support to families in quarantine and communities isolated because of the COVID-19 pandemic by providing food parcels to 20,078 individuals.

106. WFP provided food assistance to 380,593 people through electronic vouchers, multipurpose cash assistance and food parcels to improve the nutrition and well-being of severely food-insecure and vulnerable Palestinians.

107. Following the August 2022 escalation in Gaza, WFP provided around 150 families with a one-time top-up to the monthly electronic food voucher and provided around 325 new beneficiaries with a monthly electronic food voucher for three months.

### **Emergency education support**

108. UNICEF provided 47,000 conflict-affected children with essential stationery kits and connected 70 schools in marginalized areas of the West Bank to the Internet and provided them with computers, reaching 10,000 children and 1,000 teachers.

109. UNICEF rehabilitated 46 schools damaged by the 2021 escalation in the Gaza Strip, benefiting 50,000 students.

110. In the West Bank, UNRWA rolled out a recovery plan that provided catch-up classes to 11,905 students (7,135 girls and 4,770 boys) in grades 6 to 10 in order to complement school year requirements and cover the learning loss resulting from school closures.

**Emergency health support**

111. WHO continued to provide technical assistance to the Ministry of Health to strengthen the health system's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Activities included establishing a public health emergency operation centre in Gaza, implementing good practices for strengthening surveillance, laboratory diagnosis, contact tracing, infection prevention and control, clinical management of critical cases and provision of the latest evidence-based guidance.

112. WHO, in response to escalations and increased violence, provided immediate trauma and first aid supplies to address the urgent need for essential medical supplies. WHO also continued to enhance emergency preparedness and response capacity across all levels of the trauma care system, including strengthening pre-hospital response services, building the first aid skills communities, supporting emergency departments, improving acute surgical capacities and providing limb-saving and limb reconstruction surgery and treatment.

113. Following the August 2022 escalation in Gaza, UNICEF undertook urgent repairs of water networks and supported 356 children in need of case management and 409 in need of psychosocial support.

114. In Gaza, UNRWA provided secondary or tertiary care to 8,733 patients and life-saving medicines to an additional 4,000 patients.

115. In the West Bank, from 1 April until 31 December 2022, UNRWA provided essential medications to 4,681 vulnerable patients with noncommunicable diseases (2,742 women and 1,939 men, including 1,776 persons with disabilities) through home distribution.

116. UNFPA supported the operationalization of eight mobile clinics that serve 50 vulnerable communities in the West Bank, thereby improving access for 28,163 people to primary and integrated sexual and reproductive health care, including gender-based violence detection and referral. A total of 8,033 women benefited from sexual and reproductive health and family planning services.

117. UNFPA supported 12,000 pregnant, lactating and postmenopausal women living in refugee camps, remote rural areas and urban areas to gain access to sexual and reproductive health counselling services.

118. UNFPA supported the assessment of eight governmental safe motherhood and emergency delivery centres in the West Bank, in order to evaluate their preparedness and quality of services. Two centres were equipped to provide emergency obstetric, sexual and reproductive health, and gender-based violence services.

119. UN-Women supported 26,823 individuals (including 22,402 women), of whom 1,352 were persons with disabilities, to gain access to essential multisectoral gender-based violence services, including psychosocial assistance and health referral.

120. UN-Women provided practitioners and counsellors specializing in gender-based violence with improved knowledge of gender-based violence case management and protection against sexual exploitation and abuse.

**Emergency housing support**

121. UNRWA reconstructed or repaired 1,504 shelters as part of the effort to clear the remaining caseload following the destruction of shelters during the May 2021 escalation in Gaza.

122. In the West Bank, UNRWA provided cash assistance to 598 individuals after the Israeli authorities demolished their homes. In addition, some 6,072 individuals (2,798

women and 3,274 men, including 63 persons with disabilities) received emergency response services, which included case management, cash assistance and referral to internal or external service providers.

123. UNOPS continued to provide shelter grants to families in Gaza whose houses were destroyed during previous escalations. During the reporting period, UNOPS reconstructed 98 new houses and rehabilitated another 222.

#### **Emergency income generation**

124. UNRWA provided short-term job opportunities to 16,834 Palestine refugees in Gaza through the cash-for-work intervention, generating approximately 884,299 workdays.

125. Also in Gaza, UNDP provided short-term employment opportunities to 525 people, including 210 women and 43 persons with disabilities, who had lost their livelihoods or homes during the May 2021 escalation.

126. ILO and WFP enhanced and diversified the financing available for shock-responsive social protection systems in order to improve the design of social protection measures.

#### **Emergency water and sanitation support**

127. UNRWA continued to provide basic water and sanitation services in all eight refugee camps in Gaza, hiring about 360 sanitation workers on a cash-for-work basis throughout the reporting period, as well as in 19 refugee camps in the West Bank.

### **C. United Nations system support to Palestinian institutions**

128. UNDP inaugurated the newly constructed Hebron courthouse and the Public Prosecution Service building and handed them over to the Palestinian High Judicial Council. Those buildings will serve over 359,000 citizens in Hebron Governorate.

129. WFP provided technical and financial support to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics to set up a hunger monitoring system. WFP also continued to support the Ministry of Social Development in building a more inclusive, shock-responsive social safety net and conducted training programmes on strengthening the Palestinian national cash transfer programme.

130. FAO continued to support the Ministry of Agriculture in developing the national food and nutrition security policy and the national investment plan, and in reviewing the national agriculture sector strategy.

131. UNODC continued to support the forensic science laboratory of the Palestinian Civil Police by training six forensic biologists in forensic body fluid analysis and by refurbishing two health and forensic clinics in the West Bank. UNODC also supported the Anti-Narcotics Administration, the Correction and Rehabilitation Centres Administration, the national programme on drug control, crime prevention and criminal justice reform, and the Public Prosecution Office.

132. UNFPA, in coordination with the relevant Palestinian national institutions, continued to support the development of quality-of-care policies, standards and protocols for sexual and reproductive health services, including the sexual and reproductive health strategy for Gaza.

133. UNFPA supported the launch of the national strategy for adolescent and youth health, the aim of which is to provide health information and services to meet the needs of adolescents.

134. ILO supported the development of a national occupational safety and health policy and strategy and a mechanism for reporting and recording of work-related injuries and diseases.

135. OHCHR continued to promote the human rights-based approach in planning, data collection and budgeting through training sessions for the Office of the Prime Minister and the relevant ministries. OHCHR also provided technical assistance to the Government of the State of Palestine to meet its obligations under human rights treaties and supported the organization of national consultations on an action plan to implement the recommendations made by the Committee against Torture.

136. OHCHR and WHO assisted the Ministry of Health in developing a list of national human rights indicators on the right to health.

137. UN-Women supported the Ministry of Social Development in establishing an emergency shelter to provide protection services to vulnerable women. Two one-stop centres were established, one in Nablus and the other in Hebron, to provide policing, justice and social counselling services to women victims and survivors of violence.

138. UN-Women supported the Ministry of Women's Affairs in developing a national action plan and monitoring system for the implementation of Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) on women and peace and security.

139. UN-Women and UNFPA supported the review of health, justice, police and essential social services for women and girl survivors of violence.

140. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) trained staff members of government, academic and research institutions on econometric modelling, impact evaluation and use of satellite data in economic analysis.

#### **D. Private sector development**

141. UNRWA provided 4,576 microfinance loans in the amount of \$4.96 million to Palestine refugee clients in Gaza. In the West Bank, UNRWA delivered 8,072 loans amounting to \$14,137,144.

142. ILO piloted an emergency employment programme to support vulnerable enterprises and cooperatives through business development services, and to promote innovative and sustainable solutions to address resource scarcity in Gaza while integrating decent work principles and labour-intensive approaches in the construction sector.

143. UNIDO organized training, acceleration programmes, study tours and networking activities for 100 start-ups and enterprises in the creative industries and cleantech sectors.

144. UNIDO conducted 146 energy audits in industrial enterprises and enhanced the energy resilience of 105 enterprises by implementing energy efficiency measures and providing renewable energy technology.

#### **E. Coordination of United Nations assistance**

145. Collaboration and coordination between donors and United Nations entities continued under the auspices of the Deputy Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, United Nations Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The United Nations humanitarian country team met regularly to agree on humanitarian advocacy and response measures. The United Nations country team continued to align its development programming with the

priorities outlined in the Palestinian National Policy Agenda for the period 2017–2022.

146. UNOPS continued to support the coordination of the importation of so-called “dual-use” material through the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism, thereby contributing to improving people’s access to services, well-being and employment.

## **IV. Donor response to the crisis**

### **Budgetary and fiscal Support**

147. The Palestinian Authority has a forecasted 2023 budget deficit of more than \$600 million, and accumulated debt is expected to reach some \$9.9 billion, nearly 50 per cent of GDP, by the end of 2023. The deficit will arise despite the financial and administrative reforms that have been implemented, such as streamlining revenue collection, improving public finance transparency and efficiency gains in service delivery, as well as restrictions on new recruitment and austerity budget measures, which contained spending, in 2022, to below the level of inflation.

148. Since 2013, external donor support, an important source of revenue for the Palestinian Authority, has declined by more than 80 per cent. In 2013, external donor support stood at nearly \$1.4 billion and accounted for a third of total expenditure. By 2022, it had fallen to less than \$350 million, or just under 3 per cent of total expenditure.

### **Donor coordination**

149. The local aid coordination structure continued to be the main forum for government-led coordination of donor-funded development interventions in around 20 sectors.

150. The Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians held two meetings during the reporting period, in May and September 2022. The Ad Hoc Liaison Committee maintained its support for urgent humanitarian and economic interventions and called for a package of incremental, durable and meaningful steps to strengthen the Palestinian Authority and chart a way towards the two-State solution.

151. Donor support enabled, inter alia, the reconstruction of houses and such infrastructure as water and sanitation, schools and health clinics that needed repair after the 2021 and 2022 escalations, as well as the delivery of assistance to poor households. Fuel supplies funded by Qatar for the power plant in Gaza stabilized the electricity supply at an average of 12 hours per day in 2022, and cash assistance was provided for around 95,000 vulnerable families. Important progress was also made in enhancing the fishery sector thanks to donor support and Palestinian and Israeli facilitation of the entry into Gaza of so-called “dual use material”.

## **V. Unmet needs**

152. The severity of the humanitarian crisis facing the Occupied Palestinian Territory is characterized by persisting humanitarian needs, as reflected by the \$502 million in funding requested for the 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan. By March 2023, approximately 12 per cent of that Plan had been funded.

153. In 2022, UNRWA continued to experience significant financial challenges and a chronic lack of funding for its core and emergency operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The conflict in Ukraine, along with its wide-ranging effects,

such as supply chain disruptions, global price spikes in staples and high inflation, among others, has contributed to this situation. As a result, the prices of food baskets delivered by the Agency increased by as much as 40 per cent during the reporting period, with a parallel increase in the costs borne by UNRWA. Owing to the ongoing funding crisis, critical emergency operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory could only be maintained through advances from the Agency's programme budget, increasing the already high level of liabilities and debt carried into the 2023 cycle of operations. UNRWA had to scale down certain interventions, such as cash-for-work, multipurpose cash assistance in Gaza and the provision of transportation to students living in areas at high risk of conflict in the West Bank. As of March 2023, the Agency's emergency appeal for the Occupied Palestinian Territory was 4.5 per cent funded.

## VI. Challenges

154. The continued absence of a political process to end the occupation and achieve a viable two-State solution continues to be the largest impediment to Palestinian development. The commitments made at the Aqaba and Sharm el-Sheikh meetings, if implemented, could be an important start point for reversing negative trends on the ground.

155. Continued Israeli settlement expansion, demolitions, evictions, closures, access and movement restrictions, and other aspects of the protracted military occupation severely affected the humanitarian, social, economic and political life of Palestinians, as well as their security and ability to exercise their fundamental human rights. The significant increase in violence and incitement during the reporting period perpetuated mutual fear and suspicion.

156. The internal Palestinian political division also continued to place formidable obstacles to development, addressing humanitarian needs and restoring a political horizon. In this regard, the Algiers Declaration is a positive step towards intra-Palestinian reconciliation.

157. With respect to the dire fiscal situation of the Palestinian Authority, while revenues have improved in recent months, expenditure continued to grow and adequate budget support from donors has not been forthcoming, with most key fiscal reforms still pending. These factors have made it increasingly difficult for the Palestinian Authority to meet minimum recurrent expenditures, address outstanding arrears and make critical investments in the economy and the Palestinian people.

## VII. Conclusions

158. The operational context for the work of the United Nations during the reporting period was increasingly difficult because of the challenges outlined in the present report. The United Nations will continue coordinating and delivering humanitarian and development assistance, while working towards the realization of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#), [338 \(1973\)](#), [1397 \(2002\)](#), [1515 \(2003\)](#), [1850 \(2008\)](#), [1860 \(2009\)](#) and [2334 \(2016\)](#), an end to the occupation that began in 1967 and the establishment of an independent, sovereign, democratic, viable and contiguous Palestinian State, existing side by side with Israel in peace, within secure and recognized borders and with Jerusalem as the capital of both States.



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**Strengthening the coordination of humanitarian and  
disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including  
special economic assistance**

**Economic and Social Council  
2024 session  
27 July 2023–24 July 2024  
Agenda item 14  
Implementation of the Declaration on the  
Granting of Independence to Colonial  
Countries and Peoples by the specialized  
agencies and the international institutions  
associated with the United Nations**

## Assistance to the Palestinian people

### Report of the Secretary-General

#### *Summary*

The present report, submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution [78/121](#), contains an assessment of the assistance received by the Palestinian people during the reporting period (1 April 2023–31 March 2024). It provides a description of the efforts made by the United Nations, in cooperation with the Government of the State of Palestine, donors and civil society, to support Palestinian people and institutions.

The attack by Hamas and other armed groups in Israel on 7 October 2023 and the subsequent large-scale military operations conducted by Israel in Gaza, coupled with increased violence in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, have had a significant impact on assistance efforts.

\* [A/79/50](#).





## I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 78/121, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it, at its seventy-ninth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution, containing an assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people, as well as an assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them. The reporting period is from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

2. Information on the political, humanitarian and socioeconomic situation of the Occupied Palestinian Territory is provided in several periodic reports prepared by United Nations entities and submitted to various United Nations bodies, including the monthly Security Council briefings by the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process; the reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 2334 (2016); the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan; the annual report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA); and the biannual reports of the Office of the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians.

3. The horrific attack by Hamas and other armed groups in Israel on 7 October 2023 and the subsequent large-scale military operations conducted by Israel in Gaza have resulted in unprecedented loss of life and destruction. Meanwhile, violence in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, increased at alarming levels. As at 31 March 2024, an estimated 3.3 million Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory required humanitarian assistance, including the entire population of Gaza, which faced acute food insecurity. With 84 per cent of health facilities damaged or destroyed and a lack of electricity and water to operate the remaining facilities, the population has minimal access to health care, medicine or life-saving treatments.

4. Since the onset of Israeli military operations after 7 October, the priority of the United Nations and humanitarian partners has been to scale up humanitarian assistance in Gaza, with a focus on immediate life-saving needs. On 6 November, the updated flash appeal for the Occupied Palestinian Territory sought \$1.229 billion to meet the critical needs of 2.7 million people for the period from October to December 2023, and was later extended until March 2024. A new flash appeal for 2024 is seeking \$2.8 billion to address the most urgent needs of 3.1 million people. The financial needs of UNRWA are included in this appeal.

5. An interim damage assessment carried out by the World Bank and the United Nations, in partnership with the European Union, estimates the cost of direct damages to critical infrastructure in Gaza at about \$18.5 billion. Based on remote data collection, this figure includes physical damage and accounts neither for economic and social losses nor for financing needs for recovery and reconstruction, which are expected to be considerably higher.

6. The United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2023–2025 for the State of Palestine, which was signed with the Palestinian Authority in December 2022, has been reprioritized to reflect the changed country context since October 2023. A future conflict recovery framework, based on a comprehensive damage and needs assessment, is expected to serve as the planning and coordination

document for reconstruction and guide the development work of the United Nations country team in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

7. Throughout the reporting period, the Office of the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process continued its engagement with various stakeholders to de-escalate tensions, address the complex and dire situation on the ground and work towards establishing a political horizon for ending the occupation and achieving a two-State solution, in line with United Nations resolutions, international law and previous agreements.

## II. Overview of the current situation

### A. Political context

8. The reporting period saw the worst escalation of violence in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict since 1948. On 7 October, Hamas and other Palestinian armed groups launched a large-scale armed attack on Israel. By the end of the reporting period, the military response by Israel had rendered much of Gaza uninhabitable, with tens of thousands killed, a majority of them reportedly women and children, famine imminent in the north, according to the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification for March 2024, and 1.7 million Palestinians displaced. The occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, also witnessed intensified violence and the highest number of fatalities in years, with a significant rise in the intensity of Israeli security operations, often involving heavy exchanges with armed Palestinians, Palestinian attacks against Israelis and unprecedented rates of settler violence. Meanwhile, long-standing negative trends continued, including settlement expansion, fiscal and legitimacy crises facing the Palestinian Authority and the continued absence of a political process to resolve the conflict.

9. On 7 October, Hamas and other armed groups launched an air, sea and land attack from Gaza against Israel Defense Forces bases and Israeli border communities, killing some 1,200 Israeli and foreign nationals, including over 280 women, 39 children and 387 security forces personnel. Some 253 people, including 65 women and 34 children, were abducted and taken into Gaza by Hamas and other groups. Approximately 134 hostages, including 19 women, are still being held in Gaza. Tens of thousands of Israelis were internally displaced.

10. During the reporting period, according to the Ministry of Health in Gaza, over 32,782 Palestinians were killed and over 75,298 were wounded, mostly women and children.

11. On 6 December, the Secretary-General invoked Article 99 of the Charter of the United Nations, identifying the hostilities in Gaza as a threat to international peace and security. On 15 November and 22 December, the Security Council adopted resolutions [2712 \(2023\)](#) and [2720 \(2023\)](#), respectively, demanding compliance by all parties with their obligations under international law, including with regard to the protection of civilians, the release of all hostages and the safe, unhindered and significantly increased delivery of humanitarian assistance to Gaza. In its resolution [2720 \(2023\)](#), the Council also requested the appointment of a senior humanitarian and reconstruction coordinator for Gaza and the establishment of a United Nations mechanism for accelerating the provision of humanitarian relief. On 25 March, the Council adopted resolution [2728 \(2024\)](#), demanding an immediate ceasefire for the month of Ramadan and the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages, and reiterating the need for humanitarian access to Gaza.

12. Israeli settlement expansion increased throughout the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, where 7,920 settlement housing units were advanced or approved, compared with 5,000 in the previous reporting period. In Area C, 13,150 settlement housing units were advanced or approved, compared with 12,860 in the previous reporting period. On 18 June, the Government of Israel removed the requirement for ministerial approval at interim stages of settlement planning and delegated this authority to the Additional Minister in the Ministry of Defence. On 22 March, Israel declared close to 2,000 acres of Area C as State land, paving the way for potential planning of the area for settlement expansion. The seizure and demolition of Palestinian-owned structures in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, continued. Citing the absence of Israeli-issued building permits, which are almost impossible for Palestinians to obtain, Israeli authorities seized, demolished or forced the demolition of 891 Palestinian structures, 70 of which were donor-funded, leading to the displacement of 1,029 people, including 497 children.

13. Violence in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, which was already at a high level throughout the reporting period, increased sharply after 7 October, with the highest number of Palestinian fatalities recorded since the United Nations started systematically counting fatalities in 2005. A total of 550 Palestinians (including 409 men, 4 women, 135 boys and 2 girls) were killed, 534 of them by Israeli security forces in the context of military operations, often including exchanges with armed Palestinians. Those figures represent a 159 per cent increase in the number of Palestinians killed, which stood at 212 for the previous reporting period. Twelve Palestinians were killed by Israeli settlers and three were killed by either Israeli settlers or forces, more than twice the number recorded in the previous reporting period and the highest since 2015. During the same period, 31 Israelis were killed in the West Bank and in Israel, including 4 children, 8 women and 7 soldiers, in attacks perpetrated by Palestinians from the West Bank. This represents a decrease compared with the 33 Israelis killed during the previous reporting period. The number includes two cases involving fire by Israeli security forces and one case where the source of the fire was not determined.

14. On 29 January, the Prime Minister of the State of Palestine, Mohammad Shtayeh, announced governance reforms centred on improving accountability, enhancing revenue and upgrading services. On 26 February Mr. Shtayeh presented the resignation of his Government to the President of the State of Palestine, Mahmoud Abbas. On 31 March, a new technocratic Government led by a new Prime Minister, Mohammad Mustafa, was sworn in.

15. Throughout the reporting period, the United Nations and its regional and international partners continued to mediate and de-escalate tensions and urge Israelis and Palestinians to take concrete actions to restore a political horizon for ending the occupation and achieving a viable two-State solution. The Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process intensified international and regional engagements to prevent a further spillover of conflict and secure the release of all hostages and a humanitarian ceasefire, and made efforts to promote constructive diplomatic engagement with all relevant parties to help to address the humanitarian emergency in Gaza, help to strengthen the Palestinian Authority, and encourage progress towards a negotiated two-State solution.

## **B. Humanitarian and socioeconomic context**

### **Economic and fiscal developments**

16. The Palestinian economy remained severely constrained by challenges related to the protracted military occupation by Israel and the outbreak of conflict on

7 October. Prior to that date, ongoing Israeli closures and restrictions by the Government of Israel on the movement of people and goods into and out of Gaza, including restrictions on the export of fish and agricultural products, were projected to result in a contraction of the economy, while limiting projected gross domestic product (GDP) growth for both the West Bank and Gaza to 3 per cent for 2023.

17. Since 7 October, the economic situation has drastically worsened. Economic activity has contracted by more than 80 per cent in Gaza and by more than 22 per cent in the West Bank. The GDP of the State of Palestine contracted by 6 per cent in 2023, with a further contraction of 6 per cent projected for 2024. Job losses among Palestinian workers unable to access their places of employment in Israel due to increased movement restrictions and the closure of crossings into Israel, restrictions on Israeli commercial activity in the West Bank, and increased deductions by the Government of Israel from the clearance revenue that it collects on behalf of the Palestinian Authority resulted in daily economic losses of more than \$20 million. In the last quarter of 2023, Palestinian trade was projected to decline by 33 per cent, household consumption by 33 per cent and value-added production by 39 per cent.

18. Estimates by the International Labour Organization<sup>1</sup> (ILO) indicate that, by the end of January 2024, 201,000 jobs had been lost in Gaza. This includes an estimated 90 per cent reduction in private sector employment, a 15 per cent reduction in the public sector and a complete loss of employment for the 20,000 Gazans previously employed in Israel. In the West Bank, approximately 306,000 jobs have been lost, including a 25 per cent job loss in private sector employment. In total, job losses translate into daily labour income losses of \$21.7 million.

### **Humanitarian developments**

19. As at 31 March 2024, 3.3 million Palestinians across the Occupied Palestinian Territory needed humanitarian assistance, a dramatic increase from the 2.1 million Palestinians identified as requiring assistance in January 2023.

20. The magnitude of the humanitarian crisis and the rapidly deepening needs in Gaza are unprecedented, with the entire population facing high levels of acute food insecurity. According to the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification analysis released in March 2024, without a significant scaling up of food assistance, more than 1 million people in Gaza are projected to face catastrophic levels of food insecurity by the end of May 2024, and famine in the northern part of Gaza is imminent. Starvation-related fatalities have already been reported. Up to 1.7 million people, or over 75 per cent of the population of Gaza, have been displaced, some of them multiple times. Approximately 62 per cent of all homes in Gaza had been damaged or destroyed as at the end of January 2024,<sup>2</sup> leaving people to shelter in dangerously crowded and unsanitary conditions. As at 31 March 2024, a mere 10 out of 36 hospitals were functional in Gaza, and only partially so. Since 7 October, none of the approximately 625,000 children in Gaza have been able to attend school as a result of the conflict. An estimated 56 school facilities had been destroyed and 219 had been damaged as at the end of January 2024.<sup>3</sup>

21. In the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, movement restrictions, protection concerns and the fiscal implications of the conflict reduced access to education for at least 782,000 students, with most schools run by the Palestinian Authority shifting to hybrid teaching. Budgetary constraints and heightened access

<sup>1</sup> See [https://www.ilo.org/beirut/publications/WCMS\\_918919/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/beirut/publications/WCMS_918919/lang--en/index.htm).

<sup>2</sup> See <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2024/04/02/joint-world-bank-un-report-assesses-damage-to-gaza-s-infrastructure>.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

barriers significantly limited the provision of health services through mobile clinics. In Area C, 120 out of 172 locations reliant upon mobile clinics remain accessible.

22. Protection concerns remained central to humanitarian operations. Priority protection risks, particularly after 7 October, included death or serious injury, explosive ordnance contamination and exposure to explosive remnants of war. Family separation also emerged as an urgent concern as an estimated 17,000 children in Gaza were left unaccompanied as a result of the conflict. Gender-based violence risks have been severely exacerbated due to extremely overcrowded shelters and informal settlements in Gaza. Risks associated with sexual exploitation and abuse and with safeguarding have grown significantly, highlighting the need for increased prevention and accountability in Gaza. During the reporting period, the joint helpline dedicated to mental health and psychosocial support and to the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse responded to 66,208 calls and provided 28,228 counselling sessions. In addition, 109,328 children and their caregivers in Gaza attended awareness sessions on safeguarding and on the prevention of exploitation.

### **Movement, humanitarian access and operational space**

23. Humanitarian operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory continued to be hampered by the imposition by Israel of physical obstacles (such as the barrier, checkpoints, roadblocks and gates), administrative barriers (such as the building permit regime), restrictions on movement and access of personnel and restrictions on movement of goods into and out of Gaza, the Israeli closures and increased insecurity. These restrictions affected access to East Jerusalem and other areas between the barrier and the Green Line. After October 2023, Israel imposed several additional restrictions. From 9 to 21 October, Israeli authorities ordered a full siege of Gaza that included shutting off water (some connection points were subsequently reopened) and electricity supplied by Israel, as well as restricting the entry of all imports, including food and fuel. The sole power plant in Gaza has not been in operation since 11 October.

24. Humanitarian access to Gaza has been significantly restricted and extremely difficult. About 92 per cent of primary roads have been destroyed or damaged; internal movement is limited to certain roads and checkpoints; and the communications infrastructure is seriously impaired, further hampering the delivery of aid. Moreover, airstrikes, shelling and the use of rockets have resulted in widespread contamination with explosive remnants of war.

25. The safety of humanitarian operations has been degraded to an alarming extent. Between 7 October and 31 March, 174 United Nations staff were killed in Gaza. Inconsistencies in movement coordination and humanitarian notifications and the lack of approval for sufficient communications equipment and armoured vehicles made humanitarian work exceedingly dangerous.

26. After 7 October, Israel increased restrictions on the movement of Palestinians across the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, most of which remain in place. These restrictions also apply to the Palestinian staff of United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) holding West Bank identity documents, who have not been allowed by Israel to enter East Jerusalem to access their duty stations. At the same time, many international staff are facing difficulties in obtaining the visas required to perform their work.

27. Prior to 7 October, the fishing zone off the Gaza coast remained at about 15 nautical miles in the south, 12 nautical miles in the middle area and 6 nautical miles in the north. Since the launch of military operations in Gaza, Israeli military authorities have prohibited fishing off the coast of Gaza, further contributing to food insecurity, with reports of some fishing activities being limited in practice to very close to the shore.

**Barrier**

28. The United Nations Register of Damage Caused by the Construction of the Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, established pursuant to General Assembly resolution [ES-10/17](#), continued its outreach and claim intake activities to “serve as a record, in documentary form, of the damage caused to all natural and legal persons concerned as a result of the construction of the wall by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem”. Since the establishment of the Register of Damage in December 2007, more than 73,700 claims and over 1.5 million supporting documents have been collected in all nine governorates and in 269 of the 271 Palestinian communities affected by the constructed section of the wall.

**III. United Nations response****A. Human and social development**

29. The United Nations continued to coordinate and deliver humanitarian and development assistance in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, pivoting most of its work in Gaza and in the West Bank, after October 2023, to account for the drastically changed country context and increased needs. Some of that assistance was targeted at Palestinian individuals and communities in areas beyond the reach of the Palestinian Authority, including East Jerusalem and Area C in the occupied West Bank, and Gaza.

**Education**

30. Since the start of the 2023/24 school year, UNRWA has provided primary education to 298,927 students (144,666 girls and 154,261 boys) in 288 elementary and preparatory schools in Gaza, and to 45,195 students (27,463 girls and 17,732 boys) in 96 elementary and preparatory schools in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. In Gaza, the first semester has been suspended since 7 October.

31. During the 2023/24 school year, UNRWA provided technical and vocational education and training to 1,078 students (452 male and 626 female) in the West Bank. In addition, 692 students (87 male and 605 female) were enrolled in the Agency’s Education Science Faculty for teacher training in the West Bank.

32. In the West Bank, two new schools were under construction by UNRWA.

33. The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) helped the Ministry of Education to improve access to quality, safe and inclusive education services, supporting over 300,000 children and adolescents, including 157,000 girls.

34. UNICEF and the World Bank jointly supported new teacher training manuals in science, technology, engineering and mathematics and established clubs in those fields in 100 schools, benefiting 5,898 students in grades 7 to 11, 3,338 of whom were girls.

35. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) continued to support improved access to quality education for over 10,500 students in East Jerusalem, including by expanding education facilities to address classroom shortages. A new technical and vocational education and training school was established in East Jerusalem.

36. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) established three youth-led technical and vocational education and training innovation hubs benefiting 976 young people (655 of whom were female) and resulting in 23 new start-ups.

37. UNESCO provided stationery and recreational kits to 810 students from 18 schools in the West Bank that have either been demolished or are at risk of demolition.
38. UNESCO conducted Arabic and mathematics classes for 4,499 students (including 1,694 girls) in Gaza and provided training on pedagogical methods to 239 principals, teachers and academic supervisors.
39. The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) commenced design works for the construction of the new Yatta vocational school for 240 students.
40. From April to October, the Mine Action Service trained 18,693 persons in Gaza, who were at risk of being harmed by explosive remnants of war. Approximately 1 million people were reached by a risk education social media and radio campaign. After October 2023, the Service launched another campaign, reaching approximately 1.2 million people in Gaza and the West Bank.

### **Health**

41. The World Health Organization (WHO) continued to promote universal health coverage and the right to health by strengthening the health-care system, monitoring barriers to health-care access and monitoring attacks against health care and policies and practices that affect health rights.
42. WHO continued to enhance health information systems, support policy development, including by updating the five-year national mental health strategy and developing a gender-based violence protocol and a new cancer strategy, assess the performance of the primary health-care system, promote family practice and support the Ministry of Health in analysing financial risk protection.
43. WHO, UNICEF and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) supported the Ministry of Health in scaling up sexual, reproductive, maternal, neonatal and child health-care services. WHO and UNFPA also supported the implementation of a system to strengthen maternal, neonatal and early childhood health in Gaza.
44. In Gaza, between April and October, UNRWA conducted approximately 1.4 million face-to-face primary health-care patient consultations at its 22 health-care facilities, and about 175,000 telemedicine consultations. In the West Bank, the Agency carried out 746,996 consultations at its 43 health-care facilities.
45. In Gaza, throughout the reporting period, UNICEF provided essential medical supplies to the Ministry of Health, benefiting over 398,000 individuals. In total, 93,231 children and women accessed primary health care in UNICEF-supported facilities. In the West Bank, UNICEF reinforced health service provision through the rehabilitation of primary health-care facilities in the most vulnerable governorates and enhanced maternal, neonatal and child health services to serve 70,000 people. Over 55,000 people received medical supplies, equipment, training and enhanced access to quality services.
46. UNICEF undertook infrastructure rehabilitation for three primary health-care facilities in Hebron Governorate, covering 55,000 people in Bayt Kahil, Dura and Ayn Sarah.
47. UNFPA trained 862 health and social service providers (265 male, 597 female) on sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence while providing youth-friendly health services in five Palestinian universities to 5,896 young persons (3,068 female, 2,828 male) and supporting 970 young persons (557 female, 413 male) in gaining access to pre-marriage counselling services.
48. UNDP continued to support the East Jerusalem hospital network, including the residency programme for trained doctors from the West Bank. A digital patient care

evaluation system was introduced in 15 government hospitals in the West Bank, as well as three private hospitals in East Jerusalem. The health-care system was also strengthened through the development of a new insurance scheme for uninsured Palestinians, the introduction of a medical malpractice insurance system and the launch of a solar energy investment plan.

### **Water and sanitation**

49. In Gaza, throughout the reporting period, UNICEF supported over 284,000 children and their families with improved safe access to water, sanitation and hygiene services.

50. In Gaza, before October 2023, UNICEF had completed the expansion phase of the desalination plant and stormwater and flood protection initiative. In the West Bank, it supported the construction of a water network in Yatta, Hebron Governorate.

51. In Gaza, after October 2023, UNICEF supported enhanced waste management for approximately 120,000 people through an incentive payment scheme for front-line workers.

52. UNDP supported the roll-out of an online bulk supply monitoring system in the West Bank, enabling the detection of leakages.

53. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) rehabilitated 90 rainwater cisterns for Bedouin communities, which resulted in a water storage capacity exceeding 7,200 m<sup>3</sup>, helping to address chronic shortages and enhance resilience.

### **Employment**

54. In the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and prior to October 2023 in Gaza, UNDP supported a total of 1,233 micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises by providing access to technical, managerial, digital, financial and legal services, with a special focus on women-led businesses. UNDP also supported the creation of a total of 5,989 short-term jobs, including in Gaza prior to October 2023, through cash-for-work schemes, skill-building and on-the-job training.

55. ILO established local tripartite committees to promote dialogue between workers and employers. It also supported 14 new complaint units in trade unions, which resulted in over 1,000 registered complaints on workplace rights and safety issues.

56. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) supported capacity-building for 190 women business leaders and owners of micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises and supported the training of 13 public and private sector institutions on the prevention of sexual harassment in the workplace.

### **Targeted social protection**

57. In Gaza, 23,418 vulnerable individuals, including those living in female- or child-headed households, benefited from the UNRWA social safety net programme. The programme has been put on hold since October 2023, as humanitarian support replaced targeted social protection. In the West Bank, 36,122 individuals benefited from the programme each quarter.

58. From March to October 2023, the World Food Programme (WFP) supported approximately 180,354 Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza with monthly food assistance. After October 2023, WFP scaled up cash assistance, reaching 302,803 individuals in Gaza by the end of 2023, before transitioning to in-kind assistance. In



the West Bank, prior to October 2023, WFP had provided cash assistance to 61,420 Palestinians, scaling up to 161,000 Palestinians in 2024.

59. UNFPA provided cash assistance to 1,983 women at risk of gender-based violence in Gaza and in the West Bank, while supporting 9,060 women, girls and family members (5,423 female, 3,637 male) in obtaining access to comprehensive gender-based violence services and mental health support, and reached 7,750 community members (6,372 female, 1,378 male) with information on protection from gender-based violence.

60. In Gaza, UNICEF has provided nutrition top-up cash payments since December 2023, reaching 28,840 pregnant and breastfeeding women cumulatively, and disability top-up cash payments to 5,079 families with children with disabilities.

### **Culture**

61. UNESCO completed the renovation of the Palestinian Riwaya Museum in Bethlehem. UNESCO also continued to implement its project on the conservation and management of the Ancient Jericho/Tell-es Sultan UNESCO world heritage site, while jointly supporting sustainable tourism in Battir, another UNESCO world heritage site, with FAO.

62. Since October 2023, UNESCO has been supporting preliminary satellite imagery analysis of damage to cultural heritage sites and has verified damage to 43 such sites in Gaza.

63. The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) supported the rehabilitation of the Dar al-Consul cultural and community centre in the Old City of Jerusalem.

### **Food security and agriculture**

64. FAO supported 1,677 members of farmers' and women's cooperatives and their union through the renovation and upgrading of food processing facilities and the installation of solar panels. A new farmers' market was developed in Hebron with the aim of facilitating the marketing of products from 120 cooperatives.

65. WFP distributed climate-resilient agricultural assets and provided training to 360 smallholder farmers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In the West Bank, WFP supplied olive oil processing equipment to 10 cooperatives.

### **Human rights, women, children and youth**

66. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) continued to promote the implementation of international human rights standards in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and advocated for their integration into the Palestinian national legal system. OHCHR helped to build the capacities of the Palestinian national human rights institution and civil society organizations to strengthen their monitoring, reporting and follow-up measures with regard to the implementation by the Government of the State of Palestine of treaty body recommendations.

67. OHCHR implemented six human rights public awareness-raising campaigns and provided 48 training sessions and substantive briefings to over 1,000 participants, including over 500 women. Participants represented various institutions, civil society organizations of persons with disabilities, women's organizations and Palestinian young people, as well as 90 members of the Palestinian security sector and 23 members of the justice system working on the application of rights such as freedom of expression and assembly and on the prohibition of torture.

68. UNICEF continued efforts to strengthen the social service workforce and expand the coverage and quality of child protection services, enabling 73,296 children and 31,725 caregivers to be reached with child protection interventions.

69. UNDP, UNICEF and UN-Women supported access to legal aid services for 11,611 vulnerable individuals (76 per cent female). In addition, 27,307 people (68 per cent female) were supported with legal rights outreach initiatives.

70. UNDP continued to support the political participation of women through engagement and capacity-building, fostering their inclusion in local decision-making processes. UNDP also supported the establishment of a national coalition of over 30 youth-serving organizations.

71. UN-Women supported protection centres, including one-stop centres in Nablus, Ramallah and Hebron, a family and juvenile protection unit in Ramallah, a centre for girl survivors of violence and girls in conflict with the law, a centre for older persons in Jericho, and an emergency shelter in Baytunya.

72. UN-Women provided support to 6,258 individuals, including 3,972 women, for obtaining access to services for women survivors of violence. In addition, UN-Women indirectly reached over 100,000 individuals with awareness-raising actions on the issues of violence and access to services, using social media tools.

73. UNFPA supported access for 735 adolescents (640 girls, 95 boys) to educational sessions on gender roles, bodily autonomy and adolescent health, which were implemented in 20 schools and 11 Ministry of Social Development centres, and conducted additional outreach with 24,647 community members (12,084 female, 12,563 male).

74. UNFPA supported skills development for 933 young leaders, over half of whom were female, including on the design and implementation of 50 peace, resilience and cultural initiatives reaching 6,000 people.

75. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime trained 60 professionals working with youth (20 women, 40 men) on preventing drug use, violence and crime through sports and family skills, provided sports equipment to 42 schools, and implemented related programmes reaching 249 young people (169 girls, 80 boys) and 95 female caregivers.

76. In Gaza, from April to October 2023, the Mine Action Service implemented a community-based resilience training programme focused on women's empowerment, reaching 4,589 individuals, including 2,923 women.

77. In the West Bank, UNRWA provided counselling and case management services for 450 protection cases, 178 of which involved survivors of gender-based violence. In Gaza, between April and October 2023, UNRWA provided mental health and psychosocial support services to 25,453 Palestine refugees and referred 1,650 women to legal counsellors. School counsellors provided group counselling to 10,893 children and individual counselling to 10,131 students.

### **Environment, housing and urban development**

78. UN-Habitat continued to support spatial planning and mapping land rights for communities in the West Bank, aiming to benefit 180,000 individuals through improved statutory plans and participatory land settlement. It also continued to support gender-responsive, safe and inclusive public spaces in Palestinian cities, benefiting 1.2 million people.

79. UNDP helped to attract new green economy investments through public-private partnerships, helping about 41,750 people to gain access to clean energy. In addition,

it installed 998 kilowatt peak of renewable energy systems in 17 institutions, including health and education facilities.

80. Prior to October 2023, UNDP had also continued to support the master plan for Wadi Gaza. A total of 34,000 tons of waste were transferred from Wadi Gaza to the sanitary landfill, and greening measures covered 42,000 m<sup>2</sup>, contributing to ecosystem restoration and benefiting approximately 67,000 men and 69,000 women in the surrounding communities.

81. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) contributed to an annual reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 13,475 tons and annual energy savings of 8,066 MWh, through efficiency and renewable energy interventions in industrial enterprises in the West Bank and, prior to October 2023, in Gaza.

## **B. United Nations system emergency assistance**

82. The United Nations continued to provide the bulk of humanitarian assistance in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and significantly scaled up the provision of life-saving aid in Gaza after October 2023, with the aim of reaching 2.7 million people, including the entire population of the Gaza Strip, amid severe access restrictions.

### **Emergency agriculture support**

83. FAO provided in-kind support, including plastic sheds, animal fodder and energy blocks, for nearly 1,000 herding households. In response to the current humanitarian crisis, additional support initiatives have begun for livestock holders.

### **Emergency food support**

84. In Gaza, between April and October 2023, UNRWA supported 1,166,882 refugees through in-kind emergency food assistance, covering 50 per cent of their daily caloric needs.

85. In the West Bank, UNRWA, in partnership with WFP, provided in-kind emergency food assistance to 38,347 members of Bedouin communities.

86. In October 2023, UNRWA, together with WFP, initially distributed food commodities, including wheat flour, to 1.6 million internally displaced persons in Gaza. UNRWA and WFP then expanded their emergency response agreement to jointly provide emergency food assistance to the entire population of 2.2 million persons in Gaza, with each organization aiming to reach 1.1 million people and meet 100 per cent of their food needs through the provision of staple dry foods and ready-to-eat canned foods.

87. WFP and UNRWA also continued to provide in-kind food assistance to approximately 38,000 individuals from Bedouin communities in Area C of the West Bank, the majority of them Palestine refugees. Around 60 per cent of the food basket was purchased locally.

88. In Gaza, after November 2023, WFP transitioned from cash transfers to in-kind assistance, as commercial food stocks declined. A partnership between WFP and UN-Women assisted 14,716 women-headed households (reaching 73,582 persons). WFP also supported 11 bakeries in the daily production of bread, benefiting more than 160,000 people. Nutrition supplements were distributed to 50,769 individuals, including 14,369 pregnant and breastfeeding women and 36,400 children under 5 years of age.

**Emergency education support**

89. In Gaza, UNICEF has supported the Ministry of Education and partners in developing a national emergency response plan aimed at ensuring the well-being of 50,871 children and adolescents (of whom 26,908 are girls) through recreational activities and has provided 3,700 adolescents girls with dignity kits. In the West Bank, UNICEF pre-positioned over 20,000 essential education-in-emergency stationery kits.

90. In Gaza, UNRWA was forced to suspend regular education support as a result of the conflict. As at 31 March 2024, 120 UNRWA school buildings (64 per cent) were affected by the hostilities, including some by direct hits. All undamaged UNRWA facilities, a majority of them schools, are hosting internally displaced persons.

91. In Gaza, UNESCO provided mental health and psychosocial support services to 1,580 internally displaced children (791 girls, 789 boys) across eight public school shelters. Some 810 caregivers, all of whom were women, also participated in psychosocial support workshops.

**Emergency health support**

92. WHO supported casualty management, preparedness and response capacity across all levels of the emergency care system, while also helping to maintain the continuity of essential health services. Health commodities procured by WHO with UNDP support have reached an estimated 500,000 patients in Gaza.

93. WHO undertook missions to several hospitals in Gaza to assess needs, evacuate patients and deliver essential medical supplies and fuel.

94. UNICEF continued to support essential medical services, including maternal, neonatal and child health, reaching 38 health facilities and shelters across Gaza and providing supplies to reach 487,000 people. In the West Bank, UNICEF pre-positioned emergency health kits to meet the needs of 50,000 people for three months.

95. In Gaza, UNICEF provided 966,300 routine vaccine doses for an estimated 134,283 children under the age of 18 months.

96. Since October 2023, UNRWA has extended critical primary health-care services to the entire population of Gaza, access permitting, and provided over 3.3 million medical consultations across its health centres and shelters, even as only 8 out of 22 UNRWA health centres remained operational as at 31 March 2024.

97. In Gaza, UNFPA supported the delivery of essential supplies and reproductive health kits to obstetric facilities, hospitals and field hospitals. It also directly supported 9,000 pregnant women with clean delivery or post-partum kits, over 7,216 women with access to sexual and reproductive health counselling and 6,568 people, of whom 4,525 were female, with dignity and hygiene kits.

98. In the West Bank, UNFPA supported the operationalization of three mobile clinics that served 21 vulnerable communities in Area C, East Jerusalem, Hebron (H2 zone) and the closed area behind the barrier, improving access for 19,062 people (15,658 female, 3,404 male) to primary and integrated sexual and reproductive health care.

99. Since October 2023, UN-Women has supported the provision of psychological support and recreational activities to 10,040 persons in Gaza and 813 women in the West Bank.

### **Emergency housing support**

100. As at 31 March 2024, nearly 1.7 million displaced people in Gaza had sought protection across UNRWA and public emergency shelters, informal sites or in the vicinity of UNRWA shelters and distribution sites, and within host communities.

101. In the West Bank, UNRWA provided cash-based assistance to 925 individuals displaced by demolitions, of whom 287 were from Jenin refugee camp. A total of 14,416 individuals (7,095 women and 7,321 men) who were negatively affected by protection threats, including Israeli security forces operations, displacement and settler violence, received emergency response services, including cash-based assistance, for shelter repair, psychological first aid and referrals to internal or external service providers.

102. In Gaza, UNRWA, UNDP and UNOPS continued to provide support to over 7,854 refugee and non-refugee families whose homes had sustained damage during the May 2021 and August 2022 escalations, in the form of shelter assistance, cash interventions, reconstruction and repairs. The conflict that began in October 2023 resulted in the suspension of these projects.

103. Prior to October 2023, UNOPS was delivering about 3 million litres of fuel every week to the Gaza power plant, increasing the electricity supply from four hours daily to about eight. After October 2023, UNOPS provided emergency fuel and associated monitoring services to essential humanitarian locations.

### **Emergency income generation**

104. Prior to October 2023, UNRWA had provided short-term job opportunities to 10,046 Palestine refugees in Gaza through cash-for-work interventions, generating approximately 557,968 workdays through the creation of the equivalent of 2,636 full-time jobs.

105. Since October 2023, UNRWA has continued to provide short-term job opportunities to 4,151 internally displaced persons in Gaza through cash-for-work interventions.

106. Since October 2023, UNDP has been supporting short-term employment opportunities in Gaza, with 1,385 people (628 women and 757 men) currently deployed in the health and municipal services sectors.

107. ILO strengthened national mechanisms to provide temporary cash assistance to Palestinians from Gaza displaced in the West Bank. ILO supported the provision of emergency relief packages to 2,755 workers from Gaza who were stranded in the West Bank without social protection.

108. Since October 2023, UNICEF has provided cash assistance to 555,311 people (83,890 families, including 295,753 children, 18,125 persons with disabilities and 43,644 female-headed households).

### **Emergency water and sanitation support**

109. In Gaza, UNRWA has continued to provide basic water and sanitation services in accessible areas, even during the ongoing hostilities. Ten wells operated by the Agency provide approximately 3,000 m<sup>3</sup> of water daily, meeting critical needs in Jabalia camp, Khan Yunis and Rafah.

110. In Gaza, through the agreed United Nations mechanism on fuel imports, UNICEF provided over 1.05 million litres of fuel for water wells and desalination plants, benefiting 1.32 million people. In addition, it provided fuel, supported the repair of one wastewater treatment plant and constructed 1,180 emergency family

latrines, benefiting over 275,000 people. Furthermore, 3.1 million litres of bottled water were distributed, benefiting over 858,000 people, as were diverse hygiene products, benefiting over 444,348 people.

111. In Gaza, since October 2023, UNDP has installed seven solar-powered desalination units, producing 125,000 litres of water per day, for about 45,000 internally displaced persons. UNDP, in collaboration with UNRWA, also supported the removal of approximately 16,000 tons of waste.

### **C. United Nations system support to Palestinian institutions**

112. UNDP introduced 22 digital solutions, including a user-friendly platform for paying property taxes online, and digitized and published 10 ministerial budgets to enhance transparency and enable citizens' access to government financial statements. UNDP also provided technical support to the Government of Palestine in the national planning process and in national administrative reform efforts.

113. WFP helped to enhance the monitoring and analysis of food insecurity by Palestinian institutions and assisted in establishing a geographic information system for the Ministry of Social Development.

114. FAO supported multiple ministries as well as the Palestinian Standards Institution in the areas of food safety inspection and certification.

115. UNODC continued to support the forensic science laboratory of the Palestinian police. It also supported the Anti-Narcotics Administration, the Correction and Rehabilitation Centres Administration, the national programme on drug control, crime prevention and criminal justice reform, and the Public Prosecution Office.

116. UNFPA supported the update of the national obstetric protocol and the initiation of a breast cancer protocol, guidelines for the updated standard operating procedures for the gender-based violence national referral system, and an assessment of the sexual and reproductive health national strategy.

117. UNFPA supported the operationalization of a national population committee in the State of Palestine and collaborated with the national Higher Council for Youth and Sport in the development of a new national youth strategy and a digital dashboard, and with the Ministry of Culture on an online hub for cultural and social innovation projects.

118. OHCHR supported dialogue between the Government of the State of Palestine and the Committee against Torture, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Human Rights Committee, including through national consultations with civil society in the West Bank and Gaza. It also supported the development of national action plans based on the findings of the Committee against Torture, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Committee on the Rights of the Child. The Government subsequently published the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the Official Gazette, making these human rights treaties an integral part of the Palestinian legal system.

119. ILO provided technical assistance to the Ministry of Social Development, which led to the adoption of dedicated social allowances for older persons and persons with disabilities. Disbursement to 33,946 beneficiaries was expected to begin in April 2024. ILO also facilitated a comprehensive national dialogue contributing to a revised draft social security law.

120. UN-Women, UNICEF and UNDP supported the rehabilitation of the Hebron justice service centre of the Ministry of Justice, to enhance accessibility for persons with disabilities. Courthouses and prosecution offices in Jericho, Halhul, Yatta and Bethlehem were also rehabilitated to meet international standards. The Mizan case management system was further upgraded to include the linking of over 170,000 marriage, divorce, inheritance and other certificates with the civil records registry, reducing waiting times and enhancing justice sector digitalization.

121. UN-Women facilitated a tripartite collaboration among the Ministry of National Economy, the Ministry of Finance and Planning and the Palestinian Monetary Authority on removing barriers facing women in the economic sector. As a result, 12 policy tools were developed and approved, along with a guidance manual on government services for women business leaders.

122. UNESCO provided technical support to the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in developing a monitoring and evaluation system and supported the Ministry of Culture on the implementation of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

123. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development supported the training of researchers and officials from multiple Palestinian government entities on the usage of the updated macroeconomic model for forecasting economic trajectories, allowing for better-informed policy decisions.

124. UNICEF supported the transboundary Israeli-Palestinian Joint Water Committee in holding discussions on increasing the water rates and finding solutions for safely managed levels of sanitation.

#### **D. Private sector development**

125. Before October 2023, UNRWA had provided 4,576 microfinance loans in the amount of \$4.96 million to Palestine refugee clients in Gaza. In the West Bank, UNRWA provided 4,664 loans amounting to \$8.16 million, 1,815 of which were provided to refugee clients.

126. UNDP continued to support the Monshati national help desk scheme and online platform for micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, which has been accessed by over 25,000 entities, 2,700 of which benefited from services provided by 27 local partners.

127. UNIDO supported a new specialized centre assisting industries to adopt sustainable energy measures and innovative technological upgrades. UNIDO also conducted 32 energy audits in industrial enterprises and enhanced the energy resilience of 148 enterprises.

#### **E. Coordination of United Nations assistance**

128. Collaboration and coordination between donors and United Nations entities continued, under the auspices of the Deputy Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, United Nations Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The humanitarian country team, which includes both United Nations agencies and partners, met regularly to agree on humanitarian advocacy and response measures, including the issuance of flash appeals. The United Nations country team continued to work closely with the Palestinian Authority to align development programming with national priorities,

adjusting to a drastically changed context and beginning to plan for post-conflict recovery after 7 October.

129. During the escalation in May 2023, the Access Support Unit coordinated the relocation of 159 staff members of diplomatic missions, international NGOs and the United Nations out of Gaza. After 7 October, the Unit facilitated the evacuation of 241 United Nations and international NGO staff and their dependants, including both relocation and medical evacuation cases. Following the start of rotations of international United Nations and NGO personnel into and out of Gaza, the Unit has coordinated over 1,400 such movements since November 2023. During the reporting period, the Unit also responded to over 4,000 access incidents not related to the war in Gaza, including through its round-the-clock hotline, and provided over 1,000 access briefings to donors, agencies, partners and journalists.

## **IV. Donor response to the crisis**

### **Budgetary and fiscal support**

130. The fiscal situation of the Palestinian Authority remains extremely precarious. While increased domestic revenue collection, ambitious internal reforms and tight controls on spending in an emergency budget were projected to have almost eliminated the deficit in 2023, deductions by the Government of Israel on the transfer of clearance revenue that it collects on behalf of the Palestinian Authority were expected to create a budget deficit of nearly \$535 million, before external budget support. As a result, the Palestinian Authority was forced to reduce spending on development to nearly non-existent levels and to continue the accumulation of arrears in payments to civil servants and service providers.

131. Since 7 October, the sharp economic decline and increase in clearance revenue deductions by the Government of Israel have reduced total Palestinian Authority revenues by more than 70 per cent compared with the rest of 2023 and have caused the budget deficit to increase to nearly \$800 million, before external budget support, and more than \$500 million, when including external budget support. As a result, the Palestinian Authority has been unable to regularly or fully pay civil servant salaries, including those of security personnel, and has increased borrowing from the domestic financial sector, further increasing its risks and resulting in an accumulated debt of more than \$9 billion (50 per cent of GDP).

132. Since 2013, donor budget support, an important source of revenue for the Palestinian Authority, has declined by more than 80 per cent. In 2013, donor budget support stood at nearly \$1.4 billion and accounted for a third of total expenditure. By 2023, it had fallen to less than \$300 million, or just under 2 per cent of total expenditure.

### **Donor coordination**

133. The Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians held two meetings during the reporting period, which were attended by both the Government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority, and by the main donors to the Palestinian Authority. The Committee maintained its support for urgent economic assistance to Palestinians and recommended the implementation of incremental, durable and meaningful steps to address the unsustainable fiscal situation of the Palestinian Authority and maintain the horizon for achieving a two-State solution.

134. The local aid coordination structure remained the main forum for government-led coordination of donor-funded development interventions in some 20 sectors. After



7 October, the Palestinian Authority established an emergency committee to streamline its work and coordinate efforts with the work being done by the international community to address the deteriorating humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

## V. Unmet needs

135. The flash appeal for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which requested \$1.23 billion to meet the critical needs of 2.7 million people (2.2 million in Gaza and 500,000 in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem), was issued for the period from October to December 2023 and was later extended to the end of March 2024. As at 29 March 2024, Member States had disbursed nearly \$1.054 billion for the updated flash appeal (86 per cent of the requested amount), \$617 million out of the \$629 million requested for the period from October to December 2023, and about \$438 million out of the \$600 million requested for the period from January to March 2024. The additional funding requirement of \$2.8 billion was requested in the flash appeal for the period from April to December 2024.

136. UNRWA experienced unprecedented strategic and operational challenges in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The Agency is facing a severe funding gap of \$357.9 million (42.1 per cent of the budget forecast for 2024), especially after several donors suspended new funding following allegations that 12 UNRWA staff were involved in the attacks of 7 October. The allegations are being thoroughly and independently investigated, and a review of UNRWA mechanisms to ensure neutrality was completed. It is essential that UNRWA receive strong political and financial support from Member States.

137. An interim damage assessment, which was carried out by the World Bank and the United Nations in partnership with the European Union, estimated the cost of direct damages to critical infrastructure in Gaza at about \$18.5 billion as at the end of January 2024. The physical damage in Gaza is unprecedented in recent history and amounts to approximately 97 per cent of the total GDP of the West Bank and Gaza in 2022. A more comprehensive rapid damage and needs assessment, which, in addition to infrastructure damage, will also take into account social and economic losses and reconstruction and recovery needs, is expected to be conducted as soon as safe physical access to Gaza is possible.

## VI. Challenges

138. The continued conflict has generated unprecedented suffering and humanitarian needs in Gaza, with considerable spillover into the occupied West Bank and the broader region. An immediate humanitarian ceasefire is critical to avert further suffering among the civilian population. All remaining hostages must be released immediately and unconditionally.

139. Since the start of the war in October 2023, the United Nations and the humanitarian community have faced critical impediments to the safe and effective delivery of life-saving assistance to 2.3 million people in Gaza, and an unprecedented loss of life among United Nations staff and aid workers. Safe and unimpeded access to and throughout Gaza is non-negotiable and essential to averting famine. The restrictions imposed by Israel on UNRWA, the backbone of United Nations humanitarian operations, represent an additional formidable challenge.

140. The ongoing hostilities and the absence of a political process to end the occupation and achieve a viable two-State solution, compounded by continued

settlement expansion, demolitions and evictions, restrictions on access and movement, violence and the continuation of a protracted military occupation, continue to impede the development of the State of Palestine, significantly hamper Palestinians' ability to exercise their fundamental human rights and contribute to the current humanitarian crisis.

141. The ongoing internal political division of the State of Palestine has been a major obstacle to development, the addressing of humanitarian needs and the restoration of a political horizon. The increase in violence in the occupied West Bank, including a significant rise in the number and intensity of Israeli operations that included heavy armed exchanges, settler violence and incitement, as well as Palestinian attacks against Israelis, only added to mutual fear and suspicion during the reporting period.

142. Addressing the dire fiscal situation of the Palestinian Authority to help it to meet minimum recurrent expenditures, address outstanding arrears, deliver basic services and make critical investments, including in the eventual reconstruction of Gaza, is a critical precondition for development. In this regard, the reforms announced by the new Government formed by the Palestinian Authority are a welcome step towards a revitalized governing body for the Palestinian people.

143. Recovery and reconstruction in Gaza will require enormous resources, the full scale of which has yet to be determined, and a set of minimum operating conditions for the United Nations and other key actors. These include an agreed transitional politico-security framework that promotes accountability, transparency and Palestinian ownership of the recovery process, a minimum level of security, a minimum level of essential services with a coherent governance framework, and the predictable entry into Gaza, at scale, of necessary materials and equipment, including those needed for rubble removal and mine action.

## VII. Conclusion

144. During the reporting period, the United Nations faced an operational context with unprecedented challenges and a previously unseen scale of life-saving assistance needs. The Organization will continue to coordinate and deliver humanitarian and development assistance throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including for the reconstruction of Gaza, while working towards the realization of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#), [338 \(1973\)](#), [1397 \(2002\)](#), [1515 \(2003\)](#), [1850 \(2008\)](#), [1860 \(2009\)](#) and [2334 \(2016\)](#), an end to the occupation that began in 1967 and the establishment of an independent, sovereign, democratic, viable and contiguous Palestinian State, existing side by side with Israel in peace, within secure and recognized borders and with Jerusalem as the capital of both States.