



**DIVISION FOR
PALESTINIAN RIGHTS**

**UNITED NATIONS SEMINAR ON ASSISTANCE
TO THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE**

**United Nations Office at Vienna
24 and 25 March 2010**

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I. Introduction

1. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People convened the United Nations Seminar on Assistance to the Palestinian People under the theme “Building institutions and moving forward with establishing the State of Palestine.” In accordance with General Assembly resolutions 64/16 and 64/17. The meeting was held at the United Nations Office at Vienna on 24 and 25 March 2010.
2. The Committee was represented by a delegation comprising Zahir Tanin (Afghanistan), vice-Chairman and head of the delegation; Pedro Núñez Mosquera (Cuba), Vice-Chairman; Saviour F. Borg (Malta), Rapporteur; Minas A. Hadjimichael (Cyprus), and Riyad Mansour (Palestine).
3. The meeting consisted of an opening session, three plenary sessions and a closing session. The themes of the plenary sessions were “The current socio-economic situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory”, “Looking to the future: advancing the Palestinian State-building agenda” and “International assistance in support of the Palestinian economy”.
4. Presentations were made by 16 experts. Representatives of 54 Member States in addition to the Holy See and Palestine, as well as 4 intergovernmental organizations, 6 United Nations bodies, 13 civil society organizations and the media attended the Meeting.

II. Opening session

5. The opening session began with a statement by **Johannes Kyrle** the Secretary-General for Foreign Affairs of Austria. He said the crucial challenge of institution-building and establishing the Palestinian State was a task that had been at the heart of the European Union ever since the beginning of the peace process. The European Union’s involvement with the Palestine Liberation Organization and later the Palestinian Authority had been at the political, financial and the technical cooperation levels. He emphasized that no peace, security or prosperity would ever be sustainable without democratic public institutions based on the rule of law and the participation of civil society which in the case of Palestine, demonstrated day after day its desire to work for the future and for freedom and dignity.
6. He said that, through the Quartet, the international community had once again reconfirmed its unwavering assistance to the establishment of the State of Palestine, living side by side in peace and security with Israel and other neighbours. It had expressed its support for the Palestinian Authority Programme, entitled “Palestine: ending the occupation, establishing the State”¹, which aims at finalizing the process in 24 months. That was also the time period the Quartet deemed appropriate for coming to a negotiated settlement that would end the occupation, which began more than 40 years ago.
7. He called on Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization to re-engage in negotiations as soon as possible and in good faith and to respect the desire of Palestinians and Israelis who want to live in peace and security. The Secretary-General of the United Nations had praised the quiet courage of the Palestinians living under occupation and had called on them to choose the path of non-violence, unity and international legitimacy during his recent visit to the Gaza Strip, the one area with the most painful

¹ The Palestinian Authority Programme on building institutions and moving forward with establishing the State is also referred to in the present document as: the Fayyad Plan; the Plan; the Programme; the Palestinian Authority initiative; and the Palestinian Authority agenda.

contradiction between the legitimate aspirations of a people and the failure of political efforts to improve their living conditions.

8. He concluded by reiterating that Austria and the donor community would assist the Palestinian people in realizing their aspirations and offer full political support to all efforts towards a negotiated settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, something which would benefit Palestinians and Israelis alike and would be the basis for a stable and prosperous Middle East.

9. A statement was delivered on behalf of **Ban Ki-moon**, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, by his representative **Maxwell Gaylard**, Deputy United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The message referred to the Secretary-General's visit to the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Israel following the 19 March 2010 meeting of the Quartet principals in Moscow, where the Quartet had reiterated its strong commitment to the two-State solution and the need for resumed negotiation to move quickly to achieve that goal.

10. He said the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory remained of concern, particularly in Gaza and East Jerusalem. In Gaza, reconstruction remained nearly impossible owing to the Israeli closure. During his visit, he had informed the people in Gaza that the Government of Israel had approved a number of United Nations civilian recovery projects involving, inter alia, water and sanitation, the repair of a flour mill, the provision of containers to temporarily accommodate schools run by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and the completion of a United Nations housing project. He said a durable solution required the opening of the crossings for both humanitarian and commercial goods to and from Gaza, with measures in place to end weapons smuggling. On their part, Palestinian actors must bring an end to rocket attacks and rise above partisan interests to pursue the reunification of Gaza and the West Bank. He reiterated his condemnation of rocket fire from Gaza, which indiscriminately targeted civilians, and said that, in Gaza, he had called publicly for the release of Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit and Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails.

11. He explained that Israel's policy of settlement restraint was a step beyond previous Governments' positions. During his visit, he had emphasized to Israeli leaders that settlements were illegal under international law and that the road map called for a full settlement freeze, including in East Jerusalem. He had also expressed his concern at the announcement to include holy sites in the West Bank in the list of Israeli heritage sites and at other provocative actions, such as evictions, home demolitions and plans for new settlement construction in East Jerusalem. Such actions had sent the wrong signal as the international community worked to restart negotiations. He recommended that, at the critical juncture, all sides needed to observe calm, show restraint and refrain from inflammatory rhetoric.

12. He welcomed Palestinian efforts towards reform, institution-building and development under the leadership of Prime Minister Salam Fayyad aimed at establishing a Palestinian State. It was vital that the Palestinian Authority should continue to advance the State-building agenda while striving to meet its other road map obligations in full. He encouraged key contributors to Palestinian State-building to channel their assistance through the Authority's single treasury account and donors to frontload financial support. He noted that reform efforts had contributed to an increase in gross domestic product of 6.8 per cent in 2009, stressing that Israel's lifting of restrictions had also encouraged growth in the West Bank. He moved on to conclude that negotiations did not take place in a vacuum and that the situation on the ground must support talks. While the international community remained committed to advance the political process with a view to ending the occupation, he said, on his part, that he would continue to engage all concerned to realize two States, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security.

13. The head of the delegation of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, **Zahir Tanin**, began his statement by depicting the situation on the ground in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. He said there was an urgent need to begin the process of recovery and reconstruction in the Gaza Strip and to end its isolation by opening all crossings. In the West Bank, Palestinian access to land and resources continued to be impeded by a multi-layered system of restrictions, including those accompanying settlements and the wall. Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem were at risk of eviction, house demolition and/or displacement. Donor contributions had been less effective in part because they were spent to counter Israeli restrictions, rather than on development projects. He called on donors to support the “2010 Consolidated Appeal Process for the Occupied Palestinian Territory” recently launched by the United Nations and other humanitarian agencies.

14. He said the Committee had supported the Programme of the Palestinian Authority entitled “Palestine: ending the occupation, establishing the State,” which was also known as the Fayyad Plan. He explained that, by creating positive facts on the ground and building the administrative, economic and institutional foundation of an independent State, the Programme could be understood as the Palestinian answer to Israeli settlement-building. Unlike Israel’s settlement activity, the Programme was consistent with international law, promoting prospects for a peace agreement. He acknowledged, however, that the Programme’s success would be determined by the measure of progress in the political area where international support for a Palestinian State was needed. He said that, after the projected two years had passed, recognition could be enshrined in a Security Council resolution that would clearly determine the borders of the Palestinian State based on the pre-1967 lines.

15. He said the Programme had been welcomed by the international community and the Quartet had acknowledged the Palestinian Authority’s serious commitment to build a State that provided opportunity, justice and security for the Palestinian people and became a responsible neighbour in the region. He noted, however, that that support was not matched by the disbursing of the billions of dollars that had been pledged previously. He ascertained that the Palestinian Authority had demonstrated the ability to transform international support into concrete programmes, citing projects such as the reform of the law and order sector and improved transparency at all levels. He said the Fayyad Plan was a logical continuation of those efforts, deserving the full support of the international community.

16. In conclusion, Mr. Tanin reaffirmed the Committee’s position that the illegal Israeli occupation of the Palestinian Territory must end without conditions, which should allow the Palestinian people to establish an independent State on all territories occupied in 1967, including East Jerusalem, and to exercise their inalienable rights, including the right to self-determination. The two-State solution should be based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 1397 (2002), 1515 (2003) and 1850 (2008). Only serious and sustained international engagement would bring about a negotiated settlement of all outstanding issues and reverse the growing support for radical forces.

17. **Ali Al-Jarbawi**, Minister for Planning and Administrative Development of the Palestinian Authority, stressed that the Palestinian cause was not a humanitarian or a development cause, but a political cause par excellence. Conveying his thanks for the sustained financial support from the international community, he stressed that there was an equal need for political support that would facilitate Palestinian economic progress. He said that, as Minister of Planning he could not do much planning, because of Israeli actions and restrictions.

18. He said that, in cooperation with donors, he was working on some 84 projects, ranging from \$1 million to \$1 billion yearly. He was particularly grateful for that support, as it came within the framework of support for the Palestinian cause. It was essential that assistance to the Palestinians contributed to a straightforward process consisting of ending the occupation and building a Palestinian State. If that goal was not reached quickly, the small achievements would remain unimportant.

19. The opening session was followed by a keynote presentation by **Ali Al-Jarbawi**, Minister for Planning and Administrative Development of the Palestinian Authority.

20. He began by expressing his appreciation for the work of the Committee, noting that its 2009 report called for the resumption of permanent status negotiations and for genuine commitment of the Israeli Government to the two-State solution. It was in line with the Palestinian Authority Programme entitled "Palestine: ending the occupation, establishing the State". He said the Palestinian Authority stood ready to engage in final status negotiations, stressing that such a process must not be open-ended lest the two-State solution slipped away. The timeframe concern had influenced the Palestinian Authority Programme, leading its author to establish a period of two years for the completion of the Palestinian State institutions. He said the Palestinians had agreed to take such a path, which they believed would help them end the Israeli occupation.

21. He stressed that Palestinians could not be coerced to live in a fragmented State, isolated in cantons, separated by walls and checkpoints, and guarded by soldiers of another State. The Palestinian Authority Programme consisting of eleven goals aimed at realizing a vision of a peaceful and prosperous Palestine. He said the Programme envisaged a State that would guarantee equal rights, freedoms and opportunities for all, free from discrimination. It was aimed at building a state committed to closing the gap in development and human security that had widened between the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and Gaza. It would restore Jerusalem as a sacred city of peace with no walls and open to all people, calling on the international community to help halt Israel's campaign of eradicating Jerusalem of its Arab Palestinian character. He reaffirmed that a Palestinian State would build positive relations with the international community by becoming a cornerstone of stability. He ascertained that Palestinians would never forget four decades of international aid, but now they were determined to build a self-sufficient Palestine.

22. He stated that the Palestinian Authority was working hard to restore its fragile economy and alleviate poverty. It had made important progress in implementing its Programme, including modernizing the legal system to create a conducive economic environment; exerting efforts to join the World Trade Organization; building partnerships with the private sector and providing basic social services. He added that progress in infrastructure was also under way to ensure that Palestinians, wherever they lived in the Territory, had access to roads, electricity and water networks. He noted that the development of the policing services and the reform of legal frameworks had brought a welcome sense of security and stability. The results were especially remarkable given the Israeli restrictions on the movement of police, judges and civil servants. He wondered what the Palestinians could have achieved without occupation. He opined that there was no need to wait for two years because the Palestinian Authority had demonstrated its ability to govern and deliver services, stressing that the illegal occupation must end.

23. He expressed hope that the international community would step up its condemnation of Israeli actions that continued to take Palestinians backwards. The recent decision to construct 1,600 new houses for settlers in occupied East Jerusalem was just one current example. Settler violence against Palestinian civilians continued unchecked and unpunished. He pointed out that, despite the apparent determination of Israel to continue to hold on to occupied Palestinian land and resources, his message was that the Palestinian Authority was still a willing and proactive partner for peace. He ended by saying that the Palestinian Authority Programme was born of hope, not frustration.

24. Statements were also made by the representatives of Algeria, China, Indonesia, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Lebanon, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Morocco, the Syrian Arab Republic and Turkey. Observers of the League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the

African Union also spoke, as did a representative of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

25. The representative of Algeria said the dangerous escalation of the illegal occupation by the Israeli authorities, through the seizure of goods and property, destroyed any hope for a Palestinian State with East Jerusalem as its capital. Israel must end the destruction of Palestinian society and the denial of Palestinians' basic rights, she said, adding that Israel must also end its aggression against neighbouring countries. Algeria supported the Plan put forward by the Palestinian Authority towards establishing the institutions necessary for a viable Palestinian State. She proposed that the Seminar should send specific recommendations to the General Assembly and the Security Council.

26. The representative of China said that, thanks to the tireless efforts of the international community, both sides, the Israelis and the Palestinians, had agreed to indirect talks. With the expansion of settlement construction, however, the Israeli side had eroded the new and fragile trust between Israel and the Palestinians. She said China strongly opposed the continuation of settlement building, which was violated international law. She urged the Israeli side to show a responsible attitude by removing the blockade and to take concrete measures to improve the living conditions of the Palestinian people.

27. She emphasized that China attached great importance to the Israeli-Palestinian issue and had consistently supported efforts towards a resolution. China supported the legitimate rights of the Palestinians and welcomed their efforts to build institutions for an independent State. She said her Government would continue to extend aid and assistance to help alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people. China also appreciated the relentless efforts made by the Committee and wished to further strengthen communication and cooperation with it.

28. The representative of Cuba said the Cuban people had always taken a clear and unambiguous stand in support of the struggle of the Palestinian people and for an independent State with East Jerusalem as its capital. She stressed that Israel should withdraw unconditionally from the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Cuba had condemned the Gaza blockade or Israel's policy of attrition through starvation and its decision to establish new settlements, which undermined any chance for negotiations to succeed. Her Government also condemned targeted assassinations, arbitrary arrests, measures undermining the Palestinian economy and the dividing wall of "shame".

29. She said there was a lack of political will to work towards a solution. Full implementation of Security Council and General Assembly resolutions was required. Paying tribute to the staff of UNRWA, she said it should be supported through an increased regular budget. Israel should also compensate that body for the damages it suffered as a result of Israeli aggression in the Gaza Strip. She expressed confidence that the Seminar would step up international awareness and political support for the Palestinian people. She confirmed her support for the appeal made earlier by the Palestinian Authority Minister for the need to include political support in any economic plan.

30. The representative of Indonesia said it was regretful that, while global leaders would be convening in New York later in 2010 to review progress on the Millennium Development Goals, those Goals were meaningless for Palestinians. He noted that, although they could not develop their economy and institutions, the Palestinians continued to wage their struggle for sovereignty and social and economic normalcy. That struggle had always been supported by Indonesia.

31. He said that there was a need to make that support more practical and sustainable. To contribute to the capacity building of the Palestinian people, the Indonesian Government had for two years conducted training for Palestinian diplomats. That was the kind of sharing Indonesia was capable of, despite its limited resources. In addition, Indonesia had pledged to provide support for 10,000

Palestinians to build their political economy and social institutions and ensure that the future Palestinian State would be viable. He also drew attention to the fact that, the previous year, Indonesia had hosted the United Nations Asia and Pacific Meeting on the Question of Palestine organized by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, and described its outcomes.

32. The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran said that the continuing crisis in the Middle East came from the silence of the international community about the occupation of the Palestinian Territory and the ignoring of its peoples' human rights. He listed actions by Israel that violated international law, including the killing of women and children, the destruction of infrastructure and the construction of the wall and settlements. He stressed that the main problem was not a shortage of peace plans but a lack of awareness that the root cause of the crisis was Israel's refusal to comply with any international obligations. He said the Islamic Republic of Iran believed that the resolutions of international organizations could not fully restore the rights of the Palestinian people as long as the defiance of Israel continued, supported by its allies, in particular the United States. Consequently, he said Israel had no genuine will to help the Palestinians achieve a dignified life.

33. He said his Government was demanding an end to the Israeli occupation of all Palestinian and other occupied territories. He stated that the Islamic Republic of Iran had proposed a democratic plan to resolve the issue of Palestine, which included the return of refugees and the holding of a referendum among all the peoples of Palestine on their future State. He concluded by declaring the Islamic Republic of Iran's readiness to participate in a collective cooperation effort to help the Palestinian people regain their inalienable rights to a dignified and prosperous life in their own homeland

34. The representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea said that many countries were calling upon the United Nations and the international community to end at once the Israeli atrocities in the Gaza Strip, take effective measures to protect Palestinian civilians and provide them with the necessary assistance. He noted that Israel's military operations against the Palestinians had impacted the Palestinian economy as well as peace and stability in the Middle East. In addition, Israel had been expanding settlements and demanding a conditional peace treaty. He opined that the reason why the Palestinian problem remained unresolved was that the United States and a few other countries were complicit in the Israeli occupation. Concluding, he said that Israel must immediately stop all actions aimed at permanent occupation, including military operations, air strikes, settlement construction and the economic blockade.

35. The representative of Lebanon said his country had suffered along with the Palestinian people because of Israel's actions and by continuing to host Palestinian refugees. Israel had blocked all initiatives aiming to improve the bleak economic situation in the West Bank and respond to the urgent need to reconstruct Gaza, including the Secretary-General's initiative. He said that Israel continued to violate international law by its recent decision to build 1,600 housing units in East Jerusalem and to take control of holy sites in the West Bank. He explained that Israel's actions had also impacted the Palestinian economic sectors, including agriculture. Israel had grabbed agricultural land, uprooted trees and misused artesian wells, leading to high groundwater salinity.

36. Moving to the futuristic vision of establishing a Palestinian State, he invited donors to enhance their contributions to the Palestinian civilians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and to UNRWA, which had difficulties in providing assistance to refugees in camps in host countries and the Occupied Palestinian Territory. He recalled that Israel had rejected the Arab initiative and had continued settlement expansion, isolating Arab villages and towns in order to void any peace initiative. He stated that the United Nations must help Palestinians achieve a decent standard of living by pressuring Israel to implement international resolutions, in order to establish a Palestinian State with East Jerusalem as its capital.

37. The representative of Morocco reaffirmed his country's commitment to support the Palestinian people and called for an end to the blockade against them. He said the Israeli occupation and the construction of the dividing wall and settlements had weighed heavily on the economy and institutions of Palestine, reducing the capacity for economic and social development in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. One third of the workforce was unemployed and 61 per cent of Palestinians lived below the poverty line. He said Morocco would work towards a peaceful, sustainable and fair settlement so that there could be an independent Palestinian State with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.

38. He deplored that negotiations had reached a deadlock because of the provocative and illegal Israeli practices in East Jerusalem. It was necessary to support the position of the President of the Palestinian Authority on the freezing of settlements, with a view to beginning negotiations on the final status of Palestine. He condemned the decision of the Israeli Government to authorize the construction of 1,600 settlement dwellings in East Jerusalem. That decision, he said, confirmed the strategy to isolate East Jerusalem from other Palestinian lands and separate it from any final solution, reaffirming that Morocco would spare no effort to preserve the city's legal status and its cultural and religious character.

39. The representative of the Syrian Arab Republic said that, to assist the Palestinian people, there was a need to address the root causes of their suffering, namely the continuous occupation of Arab territories, including the Syrian Golan. Israel's constant expansion, with its ulterior motive to build facts on the ground, had led to the bloodshed of innocent people. For more than 60 years, the Palestinians had endured harsh realities; they had been slaughtered; their houses destroyed; and their land confiscated and Judaized. In the Gaza Strip, Palestinians were living under a cruel blockade and the city of Jerusalem was undergoing blatant violations, rendering the situation worrisome. The continuation of illegal settlement construction, the annexation of Islamic holy shrines and the immoral blockade in the Gaza Strip were destabilizing regional and international security.

40. He stressed that the disregard by Israel of its commitments under international law, including United Nations resolutions, was not acceptable. The international community was incapable of putting an end to the vicious aggression against the Palestinian people. The failure to prosecute the perpetrators of the crimes committed against the Palestinians enabled the continuation of illegal Israeli policies. He said the Syrian Government reaffirmed the need to solidify all international efforts to assist the Palestinian people to liberate their homeland and to restore their full rights, including the establishment of a sovereign State with Jerusalem as its capital and the return of the refugees.

41. The representative of Turkey, announcing that his country would host the next meeting of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People in Istanbul, said the Palestinian question was at the heart of all problems in the Middle East. A solution to the problem was therefore also important in terms of its implications for the region. The international community must keep the pressure on Israel, so that it refrained from provocative acts, including those in Jerusalem and the Al-Aqsa Mosque, and so that Israel froze settlement construction and lifted the blockade against Gaza.

42. The perpetuation of the current situation in Gaza was dangerous from humanitarian, political and security points of view. He underscored the importance of Palestinian unity not only for administrative and security matters but for the revitalization of the peace process. Turkey would remain committed to help achieve progress on all tracks and support Palestinian State-building and socio-economic development.

43. The representative of the African Union said, bearing in mind the various United Nations reports, the African Union Commission of the was highly concerned about the deteriorating humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory as a consequence of the siege of the Gaza Strip and restrictions on the freedom of movement of the Palestinians. She called upon the Israeli authorities to lift

restrictions and open up all crossing points to begin the reconstruction process in Gaza, noting that the reconstruction funds pledged at the Sharm el-Sheikh conference had not been disbursed. She stressed that the human rights of the people of Gaza were being systematically trampled, but no investigations had been carried out to document those grave violations.

44. She asserted that, despite all the international community's efforts to re-establish dialogue, Israel continued its illegal activities, expanding settlements, extorting Palestinian property and disregarding the peace process. Indeed, Israel considered that the Palestinian people had no right to self-determination. She recalled that, at the recent meeting of the African Union in Addis Ababa, the Executive Council had expressed its support for the Palestinian people's right to end occupation and build their independent State. It also supported efforts to end the division among the Palestinian people. She ended by saying that the African Union had reasserted its belief that a lasting peace should involve the return of refugees and Israeli withdrawal to pre-1967 borders, including withdrawal from Syria and Lebanon.

45. The representative of the League of Arab States said the Palestinian people were still deprived of their legitimate national rights and subjected to daily aggressions through the cruel blockade and the continuation of settlement construction. He underscored that Israel was still perpetrating war crimes against the Palestinian people. It was ironic that the international community merely made lukewarm declarations about Israeli settlement policies, even though they were a stumbling block to any Israeli-Palestinian agreement. He listed other stumbling blocks, including Israeli actions in East Jerusalem, such as expropriating houses and evicting Palestinians. He said that Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails and the violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention were serious obstacles to peace.

46. He emphasized the Arab commitment to support the Palestinians in their efforts to establish a Palestinian State according to the 1967 borders and with East Jerusalem as its capital. Any further Israeli actions should be brought to a halt before any more negotiations were undertaken. Should the Israeli practices continue, all initiatives were doomed to fail. The issue of East Jerusalem should be brought before the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council and the International Court of Justice. He called for an urgent meeting of the Security Council to address the conflict in all its aspects, hoping that the right of veto would not be exercised. It was high time for the international community to move forward and change its position, with a view to taking practical international measures whereby Israel would be required to account for its crimes and perpetrators of war crimes would be brought before international courts.

47. The representative of the Organization of the Islamic Conference said Israel was violating international law and had increased its aggression in East Jerusalem to alter the city's Arab character. In full view of the international community, Israel continued to murder Palestinians, build settlements and block access to the Gaza Strip. The complacency of the international community had caused Israel to act without any respect for international law, and the international community could no longer tolerate such arrogance. The Israeli blockade of Gaza was preventing essential commodities from reaching Palestinians, constituting a human rights crime that required bringing the perpetrators before international justice.

48. He said the absence of a fair solution to the Palestinian question was a threat to international stability. The international community must deploy all efforts to stop Israeli violations and make Israel abide by all agreements and resolutions. The Organization of the Islamic Conference welcomed the recent Quartet call for the establishment of a compulsory mechanism to force Israel to conform to international will by applying pressure, including sanctions. He called upon all States to support the Palestinians in their efforts to build an independent and sovereign State with East Jerusalem as its capital.

49. The head of the Vienna office of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) said that the hostilities in the Gaza Strip had severely damaged the environment in Gaza. He reported that the UNEP expert team deployed to the Strip to draw up an assessment of the environmental impact of the conflict had made important recommendations in its assessment report. The UNEP Governing Council had requested UNEP to help implement those recommendations and had invited Governments and international institutions to provide financial and other support to that end.

50. He said that UNEP activities in the Gaza Strip included providing safe water to all infants; compiling a report on key groundwater issues; and developing a hazardous waste management strategy for the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Projects for 2010-2011 included the development of a national water quality monitoring system; the development of a national land management strategy; the preparation of the state of the environment report; and the identification, development and implementation of a renewable energy programme.

III. Plenary sessions

Plenary I

The current socio-economic situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

51. The speakers at Plenary I addressed the following sub-themes: the socio-economic situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem; and the urgency of bringing relief and reconstruction to the Gaza Strip: the “Palestinian national early recovery and reconstruction plan for Gaza”.

52. **Mahmoud Eljafari**, Dean and Professor of Economics at the Faculty of Economics and Business of Al-Quds University in Jerusalem, said that, to ensure economic independence and growth, it was necessary to break the unfair economic and trade ties between the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Israel. He added that, in the absence of political and economic settlements, the Palestinian economy was falling behind the neighbouring economies. Forty years of Israeli economic shock policies and measures had created challenges, impediments and resistance to any improvement. He explained that the twin budget and trade deficits moved jointly. Over the past three years, the ratio of the trade deficit to gross domestic product (GDP) has been high, the worst in the Middle East. The budget deficit and trade deficit together created an increasing gap between savings and investment, in which demand for investments was high but there were no savings.

53. He showed a PowerPoint presentation that contained figures indicating the inefficiency of trade policies and public finance management. The figures showed an increase in imports from 40 per cent in 2000 to more than 60 per cent in 2008. He went on to recount that, during the period between 1968 and 2007, remittances averaged 20 per cent of GDP, increasing to 35 per cent in the mid 1980s. Consequently, remittances had been viewed as the “engine” of the economy, generating stable levels of consumption, since their flow was greater than that of foreign exchange, services, exports and foreign aid. With the declining industrial sector, demand led to an increased dependency on external markets, and remittances were going to imports, mainly from Israel. He stressed that the main challenge facing the Palestinian economy was the fall in the contribution of the productive sectors, such as agriculture and industry, from 55 per cent of GDP to the current level of 25 per cent.

54. External revenues, including donor grants, had quadrupled from 1999 to 2008, to nearly \$2 billion or 40 per cent of GDP, becoming the new engine of the economy. Ninety per cent of those revenues were directed to financing the current budget. Under free trade conditions and without

restrictions, intensive investment in the Palestinian economic infrastructure was needed to increase GDP on the one hand and to restructure it on the other. In the case of the Palestinian economy, labour and capital employment had risen not in the productive sectors but in such labour intensive subsectors as services and the public sector. Production factors could be imported only from Israel, and the import of technology stood at a low level.

55. He stated that the Palestinian challenge for the next two years would be to find ways to move from engagement with the Israeli economy to integration into the regional and international markets and to raise exports. While external support was needed to activate the national economy right now, he said the international community also needed to activate the Palestinian economy. As an example, he mentioned that, after 20 days of the offensive in Gaza in February 2009, the European Union had needed flowers and had therefore forced Israel to allow the export of those flowers from Gaza. That indicated that it was possible to engage the Palestinian economy. To show the impact of Israeli practices, he mentioned that, before the first intifadah, the GDP was twice that of the current Palestinian economy. He expressed alarm that, if Israeli practices continued, the Palestinian economy would shrink by about a third.

56. **Tarik Alami**, Chief of the Emerging and Conflict Related Issues Section at the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, said the blockade imposed on the Gaza Strip since June 2007 had severely restricted the movement of goods and people. In addition, the Israeli military had extended a buffer zone into Gaza that covered some 30 per cent of arable land and restricted fishing to three nautical miles from six nautical miles previously. He said that the direct impact of that measure on the Gaza Strip was a humanitarian crisis. There had been a shortage of food, medicine, fuels, electricity and other necessities, as well as cash, resulting in a 10 per cent increase in unemployment.

57. He said that, in the West Bank, there was a complex system of movement restrictions, including some 550 closures in 2009. Twenty-two per cent of the West Bank lands were deemed closed military zones. Those restrictions had also affected UNRWA, which had lost 625 working days as a result. Another measure had been the 723 kilometre-long separation wall, which was twice the length of the Green Line of 320 kilometres. The wall looped around the settlements and fragmented the West Bank, isolating most agricultural productive land. Only half of the 66 wall gates were open for Palestinians and 20 per cent of farmers in the closed areas were granted permits. Once completed, the wall would prevent Palestinians from accessing their workplaces, health services and religious sites in Jerusalem.

58. He reported that there were 149 Israeli settlements and industrial zones in the West Bank. In September 2009, the number of settlers in the West Bank, excluding East Jerusalem, was estimated at 301,200. In East Jerusalem, another 195,000 Israeli settlers lived in 12 settlements, whose overall area had increased nearly twofold by April 2008. More than half of the land appropriated was Palestinian and privately-owned. Israeli settlers had also damaged Palestinian property. He listed other Israeli measures, including extrajudicial killings, razing agricultural lands, uprooting trees and closing the West Bank completely. Regarding social indicators, he said that, in 2009, unemployment had reached 31.4 per cent in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and 42 per cent in Gaza. Moving to 2007 figures, he said the poverty rate had reached 57.3 per cent with 76.9 per cent of households in Gaza living below the poverty line.

59. With the aid of some graphs, he discussed the impact of the Israeli measures on other social indicators such as health, nutrition and food security, education, and water and sanitation. He said that damages suffered from "Operation Cast Lead" stood at some 25 per cent of GDP in 2009. He noted that 72 per cent of imports in 2008 came from Israel, indicating that Israel had used Palestinians as a secondary market. He underscored that the blockade made reconstruction in the Gaza Strip impossible. Investments were at a standstill owing to the destruction of Palestinian productive capacity, access restrictions and high political risks. In conclusion, he said the man-made disaster in the Gaza Strip only

confirmed that there was no way to alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people except through an end to the Israeli occupation.

60. Addressing the “Palestinian national early recovery and reconstruction plan for Gaza” following the last Israeli aggression, **Abdelfattah Abu-Shokor**, Chairman of the Economics Department at An-Najah University in Nablus, said the plan’s principal goals were to rebuild and alleviate poverty in Gaza. It aimed to revitalize the private sector and civil society increase employment opportunities, bolster effective coordination and exchange of information among the plan’s participants reduce economic dependency on Israel and work towards sustainable development in general. He demonstrated the need for such a plan by quoting some figures, including Gaza’s per capita GDP, which amounted to \$774, versus that of the West Bank, which \$1,718 in 2008. He said that, by the end of 2009, unemployment figures in Gaza had reached 39.3 per cent and, in Khan Yunis, 50.4 per cent, compared to that of the West Bank, which was 24.8 per cent.

61. He recounted the effect of the Israeli aggression, which had killed 1,314 people and destroyed more than 15,000 houses. He said the damage to, inter alia, the educational sector, Government infrastructure and the environment, reached \$1,326 million. In the social sector, \$315 million was needed to reconstruct hospitals and provide medical aid. Schools and other structures had to be rebuilt and educational material had to be bought. More than \$500 million was needed for the reconstruction of damaged buildings, water treatment plants and communications infrastructure.

62. The plan also recommended that damage to fishing areas should be addressed, as well as the reconstruction of tourist facilities and the provision of credit for the private sector. The Government sector needed \$68 million for the reconstruction of municipal facilities, commercial markets, and facilities for non-governmental organizations. Some \$29 million was needed for improvement of water quality and wastewater treatment, as well as for rubble removal and the establishment of new dumping sites. Some \$12 million was needed to reconstruct irrigation systems, help rebuild fishing areas, and repair roads and the storage facilities of the Ministry of Agriculture.

63. He enumerated the impediments to the plan’s implementation, namely the continued Israeli blockade of Gaza lack of movement and access imposed by the occupiers the internal Palestinian division and lack of finance. In order to finance the plan, it was necessary to open a “unified account,” establish transparent mechanisms to manage aid received and establish indicators for monitoring implementation. Although the international community had contributed \$1.7 billion to date, an additional \$1.15 billion was needed to guarantee the plan’s success. He ended by stressing that everything hinged on the lifting of the blockade, which thus far had precluded the implementation of the plan.

64. **Mahmoud Elkhafif**, Coordinator of the Assistance to the Palestinian People Unit at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, said that, in order to build an economy for a viable and sovereign Palestinian State, it was necessary to look at lessons learned. Prior to the 1994 establishment of the Palestinian Authority, there had been some kind of integration of the Palestinian economy into the Israeli economy, which was mainly used by Israel to take advantage of Palestinian resources and to isolate Palestinians from their historical economic partners, namely the Arab countries. He said even the current economic peace which had been discussed by Israeli leaders, was only aimed at controlling the policy instruments available to Palestinian decision-makers.

65. After Oslo, he continued, the Paris Protocol framework defining economic relations brought two main constraints to the Palestinian economy, the erosion of the Palestinian productive base and the control by Israel of policy tools available to the policy makers. It was a quasi-customs union, in which the Palestinian Authority could not develop a monetary or trade policy. The value added tax was determined, collected and partially paid by Israel, amounting to 60 per cent in good economic times. He stated that,

between 2000 and 2005, Palestinians lost one third of their production base, as a result of the second intifada. The construction of the wall and the closure policy impacted the productivity and capacity of the agricultural sector. In Gaza, about 15 per cent of arable land became unavailable to farmers and the area for fishing was reduced. With the destruction of the agricultural sector, the Palestinians became dependent. Since they could not produce, he concluded, they had to import, mainly from Israel.

66. He related that in the 1980s, Israelis' income had been nearly seven and a half times that of Palestinians' income; now it was about 17 times higher. Foreign net transfers came mainly from donor funding, which were just sufficient to pay the trade deficit with Israel. Three different scenarios had been developed in macroeconomic models. The baseline scenario assumed the impact of destruction and depreciation of capital stock as well as continued tight closure. The second scenario assumed reconstruction under closures, and the third assumed reconstruction with relaxed closures. The last scenario showed what the future economy would look like in a sovereign and viable Palestinian State where the productive base had been rebuilt and the Palestinian policymakers had the necessary tools available for them to use.

67. He concluded that, no matter how much was injected into the Palestinian economy, as long as that economy was under siege, the money would leak out. It was necessary to rebuild and expand the eroded productive base; provide all policymaking tools and instruments to Palestinian authorities; lift the closures and blockade; and allow free movement of people and goods to and from and in between the West Bank and Gaza. He ended by saying it would also be beneficial if the Palestinian Authority could achieve full membership of the World Trade Organization.

68. **Takeshi Naruse**, Senior Adviser on the Middle East and Peacebuilding at the Japan International Cooperation Agency, emphasized in his presentation on his Agency's activities and the Japanese peace initiative in Jericho the importance of institution-building, economic growth and building communities in Gaza and the West Bank. The Palestinian economy, which was now dependent on donations, should be shifted to a productive economy for the future independent State. Communities were the most important elements when it came to achieving stability; it would be useless for donors to supply funds unless communities joined in the peacebuilding process.

69. He said his Agency and the Japanese Government had extended community-based technical cooperation to the people in Jericho and the Jordan River Rift Valley, called the "Corridor for Peace and Prosperity". That place had been chosen because of its linkages to both east and west. There were four operational gateways, two bridges to the east and two to the west, built with Japanese assistance. Through these gateways, the markets of Jordan and the Gulf countries could be reached. The Agency was implementing various projects, including the solid waste management project, the agricultural modernization project and the tourism development project.

70. According to the Japanese concept, existing infrastructure was being used to establish an agricultural industry park. Now that the Agency's feasibility study on agro-industry had been completed, the Japanese Government planned to have the Agency take charge of advancing the Corridor initiative with a new concept attached to agro-industry. In addition, according to its concept of "eco-industry" in an area where water was precious, the Japanese Government had committed to construct solar panels. In combination with solar energy and recycled water technologies, industry in Jericho could produce high market-value products.

71. The new concept would take into account environmental considerations in combination with environmentally friendly Japanese technologies. If successful, the concept might be applicable to other areas in the Middle East. He ended by saying that such an integrated programme approach might produce a number of dialogue opportunities between Palestinians and other countries, including Israel.

Plenary II

Looking to the future: Advancing the Palestinian State-building agenda

72. The speakers at Plenary II addressed the following sub-themes: ensuring economic independence and sustainable growth through responsible governance and the development of domestic capacities and resources; the priority of developing Palestinian Authority institutions; and laying the foundation for a competent, efficient and effective public sector.

73. **Suhair Azzouni**, a Palestinian expert on gender and human rights issues, said that women and many men in the Occupied Palestinian Territory aspired towards a democratic State characterized by a culture of social justice, where men, women, boys and girls would enjoy equal citizenship rights and opportunities in both the public and private spheres. She opined that the current Palestinian Authority's commitment to build a State that would treat men and women equally required working at three levels: the enactment of gender equality laws; the enforcement of those laws by creating gender-friendly structures; and the transformation of restrictive cultural norms and traditions. The Palestinian Basic Law, which is the constitution until the establishment of the State, regarded Palestinians as equal before the law and the judiciary, without distinction based upon race, sex, colour, religion, political views or disability.

74. She reported that Palestinian women did not yet have the same nationality rights as men. Those rights remained covered by laws and regulations adopted before 1967 that denied the right of women to pass their nationality to their spouse or children. Turning to the Palestinians in Jerusalem, she said they faced harsh measures aimed at evicting them and restricting their movements. Those measures had impacted Jerusalemite women and violated their rights under the Fourth Geneva Convention. The United Nations and State parties to the Geneva Conventions were called upon to act immediately to stop those measures. The future Palestinian State must ensure that Palestinian women and men of Jerusalem preserved their right to residency, movement and nationality. It should also safeguard the social rights of Palestinian women, including the rights governing marriage, divorce, inheritance and the custody of children. A family law must be introduced that would ensure equality, equity and justice, and women should be able to receive the rightful share of their inheritance.

75. She stressed that Palestinian women should also be well protected by the law against all forms of violence. In 2006, 25 per cent of unmarried women over the age of 18 had been physically abused and 53 per cent psychologically abused. Observing that domestic violence was not prohibited by law, she noted that six honour killings had been registered in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, during the first two months of 2010. She stressed that there was an urgent need to enact a law on the protection of women against family violence and a modification of the Penal Code. Turning to the role of Palestinian women in society, she noted that it had not been adequately reflected in the various decision-making circles and mentioned that women lawmakers constituted only 7.5 per cent of the Palestinian National Council. She opined that building a future democratic Palestinian State entailed empowering women and enabling them to participate effectively in political decision-making. She acknowledged that the advancement of Palestinian women had been hindered by considerations such as education, fertility rates, the economic participation of women and the repercussions of the Israeli occupation.

76. She stressed that the Israeli occupation and its various suppressive measures, including the killing or imprisonment of spouses and sons, had increased the vulnerability of women and had forced them to work in jobs with little pay. In 2007, 8 per cent of households were headed by women, 65 per cent of whom were among the poorest. She recommended that the future Palestinian State should aim to improve the economic participation of women and increase their participation in economic decision-making, as well as protect them from all forms of discrimination in the workplace. A strategy for mainstreaming

gender issues in economic-related ministries would also result in an increase in the female labour participation rate.

77. **Geoff Prewitt**, the Team Leader for Governance and Poverty Reduction and Senior Governance Advise for the Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People of the United Nations Development Programme, said that, although the conditions of occupation were intolerable, it was important to be self-critical and to look inward when considering how statehood could be brought about. Although building Palestinian Authority institutions was central for State-building, support should also be considered for full and equal collaboration with other Palestinian actors. He stressed that good governance extended beyond the monopoly of formal Government institutions. He acknowledged that the dynamics in the Occupied Palestinian Territory were complex.

78. He observed that the lack of autonomy caused in by the Israeli occupation had often rendered the restoration of good governance secondary to the fulfilment of basic needs. The combination of external impediments and internal uncertainties facing Palestinians had led to four main challenges. First, the weakened capacity of the Palestinian Authority, which had been further worsened by the takeover of the Gaza Strip by Hamas, was destabilizing the legitimacy of government actions. Second, uncoordinated aid resources had diluted hard political decisions and had not necessarily led to the type of support required for public institution-building. He noted that there was a donor assistance reverse paradox whereby the prolongation of the occupation generated increasing external assistance with limited progress toward peace and statehood. The third challenge was the continued social fragmentation caused by the internal political differences and the geographical split within the Territory. The fourth was the limited channels available for public participation, and the questionable identity of civil society organizations such as trade unions and cooperatives diminishing the possibilities for a genuine pluralistic society.

79. He offered four key messages reading the restoration of governance, to be considered in forums such as the Seminar. The first was the pursuit of constructive and honest dialogues that sincerely addressed vulnerabilities. Attending to this matter required political will, partnerships, courage in foreign aid application and forums for public discourse. Second, he suggested the strengthening of relations between the State and its citizens by investing in better policymaking and planning, building public trust and raising the overall quality of democracy and a pluralistic society. Third, he said, resources and technical assistance must address comprehensive reform packages, recommending more consistent, better-targeted and untied aid, in accordance with the Paris Declaration, such as the “unified account”. There was a need to build a genuine partnership between donors and the Palestinian government, relying more on local civil servants who remained in the Territory and ensured the sustainability of any new system.

80. The fourth message was that an overwhelming focus should be placed on all sectors that would support all Palestinians equally and indistinctively. Taking the rule of law as an example, he said the Israeli occupation alone did not justify that the judicial sector within the Occupied Palestinian Territory continued to be weakened by fragmented jurisdictions and blurred mandates, the absence of a fully functioning legislature, different legal frameworks in the West Bank and Gaza, and restricted access to justice at the local and grassroots levels. The Palestinian Authority, in partnership with the international community, should therefore continue to invest comprehensively in the entire justice system. Fulfilling justice did not only mean dealing with laws and legal professionals but also making the population understand what their legal rights and obligations were, including the underserved layer of society, namely women and children.

81. **Mohammed Samhouri**, an economist and former Senior Economic Adviser to the Palestinian Authority, said the publication of the Programme, “Ending the occupation, establishing the Palestinian State,” represented a turning point in the Palestinians’ long search for independence and self-

determination. For the first time in its history, the Palestinian Authority had laid out the foundations for a competent, efficient and effective public sector in preparation for statehood. He said that the Programme included a list of 11 national goals as well as a detailed list of actions for their implementation in a variety of areas: social, economic, judicial and security. The objective was to build a strong and competent public sector within two years in the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem.

82. In assessing the plan, he said that, on the technical front, the Palestinian Authority seemed to be standing on sound ground. He observed that the Authority was not starting its work from scratch. After the Oslo Accords, it had managed to build public institutions that were in many ways comparable to those of its neighbouring countries. He acknowledged, however, that the way those institutions were run had been far from perfect, noting that reform efforts had begun by 1999 and had continued from 2002 onward with various degrees of success. He mentioned the 2005 RAND Corporation study that described in detail all aspects of a model future Palestinian State. He opined that there was no need to reinvent the wheel, as there was a large body of literature available on public sector building based on the Authority's experience in the 1990s. He warned, however, that building an effective public sector did not necessarily mean success in attaining national goals, especially if the governing body was operating under continued occupation.

83. Turning to the political approach, he said the question was whether the public sector would be able to take the Palestinian Authority down the road of independence. In order for the Palestinian Authority's goals to succeed, there was a need to remove constraints that could sabotage the process, including land and resources confiscation, the construction of the wall, the isolation of East Jerusalem, the closure regime and the blockade of Gaza. He stressed that the Palestinian economy was damaged by the continued occupation, which distorted the allocation of national resources, making the public sector less efficient in providing public goods to the Palestinian people.

84. He explained that the Palestinian economy, which was operating well below its potential, might suffer an erosion of its tax base and revenue generation, leading to continued dependence on foreign funds to finance deficits and investments. The international community should act beyond financial support and engage in a political role that could speedily end the occupation. He acknowledged that the continued division in the Occupied Palestinian Territory constituted another serious constraint, saying that continued fragmentation could lead to Gaza being left behind in the implementation of the Programme, even though unity was one of the Plan's main national goals.

85. **Yousef Daoud**, Member of the Faculty of Economics at Birzeit University in the West Bank, said that, although he would focus on the public sector competency, efficacy and effectiveness needed in institution-building, they were difficult to measure because the provision of public goods did not have a market value. He pointed out that the overriding goal of the Palestinian Authority's State-building Programme was to end the occupation and to restore national unity. The Programme identified basic criteria by which the inefficiency of the public sector could be measured, including overstaffing. It also identified criteria for measuring effectiveness such as defining goals in advance; cost consideration and financial stability on the revenue side, with criteria for measuring the competency of the public sector; education of public sector workers; and legal repercussions for misconduct.

86. Using graphs, he demonstrated that there was a negative relationship between grants and income from customs. When customs revenues were down, donor contributions increased; that caused instability because of the heavy dependency on foreign resources to bridge the gap in the budget deficit. He noted that the 2008 budget deficit stood at 40 per cent of the GDP, which was very destabilizing. He noted that, although the Palestinian Authority had made some progress in tax collection, it was not extensive enough to replace dependency on external resources. Domestic revenues remained insufficient to pay for civil servant salaries and the private sector was regressing.

87. Turning to the efficiency of the public sector, he showed that there was a correlation between lack of access to the Israeli labour market resulting from closures and Palestinian Government employment. In time of closure, unemployment rises, pressuring the Government to hire more people, while others join the agricultural sector. He noted that Israel had replaced Palestinian workers with guest workers from other countries. Demonstrating that there was low emphasis on education, he said the educated workforce was increasingly hired by the public sector but paid lower than in the private sector. That sent the mistaken message that there was no value in gaining an education. Moreover, Government priorities were to spend more on security than on education.

88. In an assessment of the Plan, he acknowledged that ending the occupation was a necessary condition for the Programme to succeed, as the Palestinian Authority was unable to function without sufficient policy tools. Financial stability was another necessary condition. As for building the State, however, he said there was a need for technical training, enhanced organization and incorporated planning and international support, as well as a need to increase the resilience of the people. He ended by emphasizing that international support was imperative to increased job creation, and the Palestinian Authority must put more emphasis on education.

89. **Jamal Zakout**, Special Adviser to the Palestinian Authority Prime Minister and Head of the Civil Society and Media Units at the Prime Minister's Office, said institution-building could not be disconnected from ending the occupation or from the need to rally all forces of civil society. He said the international community must do all it could to support ending the occupation. The Palestinian Authority could not be the sole player. Success in ending the occupation required an increase in basic resources, which entailed setting up modern and efficient institutions that provided basic services in a transparent way. The partnership between the private and public sector built over the last three years had been a qualitative leap. However, because of Israeli obstacles, Palestinians had not been able to tap all available resources.

90. He explained that one of the main objectives of the Programme was to rebuild the private sector and civil society institutions. Before 1994, civil society in the Occupied Palestinian Territory had had a distinctive role in providing basic services to Palestinians. However, Palestinian Authority, which was established in 1994, has a somewhat unhealthy relationship with civil society. He relayed that the collapse of the political process in 2000 had altered the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The military occupation had led to the deterioration of civil society and the Palestinian Authority had to act in that context.

91. He stated that the main achievements in security and law and order, especially in the West Bank, had not transformed into a political process that would end Israeli incursions. He noted that Israel dealt with Area C, which covered 60 per cent of the West Bank, as if it were one of the permanent status issues, and it considered Area C a vital space to expand its settlements. Israeli restrictions should be lifted to promote investments in that area. The Palestinian Authority Programme spoke clearly about the right to resist occupation and considered the building of settlements and the disputed areas a denial of the population's access to resources.

92. He concluded by saying that the Plan aimed to increase the capacities of the Palestinians by reinforcing their peaceful resistance, an absolute right under international law. He explained that building institutions was also a form of peaceful resistance. Israel, through its actions, had shown that passive resistance was now prohibited as well. He ended by reiterating that the Palestinian Authority wanted to create a direct partnership with civil society to mobilize peaceful resistance.

93. **Husam Zomlot**, a Research Fellow at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, said that generally, State-building followed the successful conclusion of negotiations and ending of hostilities, where post-conflict reconstruction and the absence of war would provide the positive peace needed for institution-building. He observed that the international community's support of the concept of establishing viable institutions began only in the nineties, which triggered a mushrooming of State-building in conflict zones. He noted that the Palestinians were not alone in receiving international support; Iraq, Afghanistan and Kosovo had also gone through the process of State-building. The difference was that the Occupied Palestinian Territory was not a post-conflict zone; peace had not been established and the political space for a Palestinian State had not yet been carved.

94. He stressed that the Palestinian Authority Programme should be supported, emphasizing that Palestinian institution-building was a priority. He noted that, during the past two years, there had been gradual progress in the Palestinian Authority's performance, and the population's trust was being re-established, which would increase its bargaining power with Israel. The State-building Programme had enabled Palestinians to regain the initiative and channel the population into a positive and proactive campaign. It deprived the Israelis of their two excuses, namely lack of security and lack of leadership by establishing a two-year timeline that pressured Israel into facing a political agenda and started the clock ticking.

95. He said that the Palestinian Authority Plan, however, faced serious challenges that were neither technical nor financial. He stressed that the Plan was operating in the most hostile environment and that its immediate challenge came from Israel. The establishment of Israeli settlements torpedoed the essence of the plan to build the State on the 1967 borders. Another challenge involved Palestinians' political and popular approval. The Palestinian Authority must do much to gain support for its State-building agenda among the main factions, in particular in Gaza and the diaspora. The Palestinian Authority's legitimacy would not only be derived from its institutions but from the degree to which it performed its functions, emphasizing that its main function was to end the occupation and redress Palestinian rights.

96. He offered three recommendations for the international community to help implement the plan. First, Israel's siege on Gaza, which was the most urgent impediment to State-building, must be lifted immediately. Second, the Palestinian elections must be held as soon as possible to arrive at a legitimate political system. Third, he recommended a paradigm shift in the international community's assistance, saying it should no longer help parties implement the reached agreements based on the assumption that the two-State solution was in Israel's interest. That assumption was no longer accurate, as the Palestinians were at a pre-State phase. There was a need for a more sensible strategy for donors that created enabling conditions for the Palestinian economy and policy, with a focus on empowerment, coping strategies and institutional and economic efficiency and resilience.

Plenary III **International assistance in support of the Palestinian economy**

97. The speakers at Plenary III addressed the following sub-themes: the role of the United Nations system in mobilizing and coordinating international assistance to the Palestinian people; support by the international donor community; and the role of regional economic partners.

98. **Maxwell Gaylard**, United Nations Deputy Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, said that the Palestinian Authority had to deal with some 20 United Nations agencies, 60 donor countries or organizations and more than 150 international and local non-governmental organizations,

which entailed an enormous challenge. He reported that the United Nations and the Palestinian Authority had devised five basic principles to revive aid effectiveness: ownership by the Palestinians and the Palestinian Authority; harmonization in order to avoid duplication; alignment of projects by international organizations and by the Palestinians, including support for the Authority's Programme; accountability and transparency; and achievements and results.

99. He explained that the United Nations presence consisted of 20 entities, including the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Representatives of those entities, who came together on a regular basis, had recently met in Ramallah and had concluded that there were five areas where the United Nations entities could start to work together to deliver to the Palestinian population and to support the Palestinian agenda. Those areas were governance, rule of law and human rights, livelihood, education, health and infrastructure. In each of those areas, six or seven agencies could come together and report to the country team. The humanitarian country team had seven members, which included international and national NGOs and the Red Cross. The country team was responsible for the yearly consolidated appeal. He explained that it was difficult to separate what was development and what was humanitarian, saying the latter had elements of reconstruction and development.

100. Turning to Gaza, he said it had become a welfare society, noting the situation had been entirely man-made. The United Nations was a big player in Gaza through the work of UNRWA and some 10 other agencies, which dealt with a sort of "mediaeval" siege that daily locked the strip in from the Israeli and Egyptian side as well as from the sea and the air. He went on to say that the reported pockets of growth in the West Bank came only from stimulus money and were not sustainable. He ascertained that closures had a great impact on the economy, and Area C in particular was doing very badly, with 79 per cent food insecurity. The areas caught between the separation wall and the Green Line had been cut off and had experienced a catastrophic drop in living standards. At the humanitarian and the development levels, there were pockets of poverty even in East Jerusalem.

101. He reported that the United Nations presence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory encompassed political, economic and humanitarian components. He recognized that the United Nations needed a unity of purpose to better serve the Palestinian people. At the same time, the Organization had the mandate and the legitimacy to encourage donors to apply aid effectiveness principles. He concluded by saying that the ultimate role of the United Nations system in mobilizing and coordinating international assistance to the Palestinian people was to ensure that such assistance was not merely focused on strengthening the capacities of Palestinians who were making history but also on giving hope and a voice to all Palestinians affected by it.

102. **Matthias Burchard**, Head of the UNRWA Geneva Office, said that his Agency served as a useful illustration of how effective the United Nations could be in addressing the humanitarian and human development needs of an important segment of the Palestinian community, namely the refugees. He said the Palestinian refugees in the Occupied Palestinian Territory constituted about a third of the West Bank population and 70 per cent of that of Gaza. The sheer size of the refugee population meant that UNRWA's operation contributed significantly to the development of the Territory and to advancing the state-building agenda. Over the decades, UNRWA had directly delivered essential services to Palestine refugees at reasonable standards of quality in a reliable, predictable way, in close cooperation with the Palestinian Authority, communities and the United Nations system.

103. Citing accomplishments in the provision of knowledge and skills, he said that the Agency had provided elementary, preparatory, vocational and technical training to some 260,000 pupils in over 315 educational institutions, while employing 10,600 educational staff. He recalling that in 1962, UNRWA had opened the Ramallah Women's Training Centre, the first vocational training centre for women in the Arab world, establishing the Agency as a pioneer in the region. In the field of primary health care, he said UNRWA had had a considerable impact in ensuring healthy lives, delivering the Agency's health care programme through over 2,000 doctors and nurses in 58 facilities. It had also established services that dealt with the consequences of protracted violence and insecurity, including mental health care and physiotherapy. UNRWA had addressed poverty by providing food and shelter, as well as microcredit to stimulate self-reliance.

104. He emphasized that the crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory was crippling what had been achieved. In Gaza, closure remained an overarching concern. He hoped that the recent Israeli decision to allow the entry of the necessary construction materials and the disbursement of the 2009 pledges to rebuild Gaza might now alleviate the humanitarian situation of Palestinians. Citing an example, he said that, in May 2007, the Agreement on Movement and Access entitlement allowed 12,350 trucks monthly into the Gaza Strip compared to only 2,236 trucks in February 2009. With respect to the West Bank, he said that, despite reports of some improvement, poverty rates among the refugees were very high, owing to the continuing extension of the barrier and the associated closure regime, settlement expansion and other restrictions. He noted that, after more than 40 years of occupation, the West Bank was splintered to an extent that compromised its integrity as a viable economic and social unit.

105. He stated that lack of funds was a primary concern for the Agency, which had been coping with the global financial crisis, rising costs of living, poverty and the declining living conditions of its beneficiaries. The Agency's 2010 financial gap had been estimated at \$141 million. He called on the international community to maintain and enhance its support for humanitarian and development work. The greatest challenge to humanitarian work, however, was the absence of a negotiated solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. He ended by saying that the ultimate assistance for the Palestinians was a just and lasting resolution of the conflict that delivered a viable Palestinian State existing in peace with its neighbours.

106. **Mike Bailey**, representing the Executive Committee of the Association of International Development Agencies (AIDA) in Jerusalem, said his organization concurred with and supported the principles and aspirations of the Palestinian people as contained in the Palestinian Authority Programme. Presenting his Agency, he said that it consisted of 90 international NGOs, operating throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory on the practical work of development and humanitarian response. He referred to the Agency's support of farmers and local cooperatives, which helped to sustain Palestinian livelihoods and promoted economic development. The Agency also worked with national and local authorities and service providers to develop and consolidate reliable and affordable access to basic services, such as water and health and education, always with an overriding concern for humanitarian rights and justice.

107. Expanding his remarks on four areas, he said that the guiding principle in translating the Programme into the foundations of a viable Palestinian State was accountability to the Palestinian people. That was true for all actors, including the international NGO community, which would continue to seek improved cooperation and collaboration with the Authority and Palestinian civil society. AIDA hoped

that in its pursuit of the goals of the Programme, the Authority would ensure that advocacy and free expression by Palestinian civil society organizations and the Palestinian people were protected.

108. Turning to the second area, he highlighted the situations in Area C and East Jerusalem. He said the Palestinian Authority did not control the rights, security or access to justice of the Palestinian people living there and encouraged the Authority to take steps to politically and diplomatically support the changes needed in Area C and East Jerusalem. There was a need to enable the development and integration of Area C and East Jerusalem into the rest of the Palestinian Territory. In East Jerusalem, 250,000 Palestinian residents were being squeezed in and harassed by Israeli settlers, who appeared to behave with impunity. The policy of the Israeli authorities was that Jerusalem was wholly and exclusively the capital of Israel. He stressed that the plight and uncertainty of Palestinians in East Jerusalem must be in the forefront of the Palestinian Authority's demands for rights and justice for its people.

109. Third, he said AIDA was also gravely concerned about the blockade imposed on the people of Gaza. One impediment to the removal of the blockade appeared to be the Palestinian divisions, which compromised the Agency's work in mitigating the humanitarian consequences of the continuing blockade. He endorsed the Programme's aspirations regarding Palestinian unity, emphasizing that they were fundamental to resolving the suffering of the people of Gaza. Turning to the fourth and last area, he said that the most serious problem that Palestinians faced in their daily lives was the continual abuse of their human rights and the obstacles they encountered when seeking justice for those abuses. Palestinians were being struck, abused, shot at and detained, without proper access to legal representation, charges or trial. They told of attacks and detention by Israeli settlers as they went to school or worked their land. He ended by saying that AIDA called for support of the human rights of the Palestinian people.

110. **Ghania Malhis**, Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of the Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute in Ramallah, emphasized that international assistance to the Palestinian people had continued to grow. She said that, from 1994 to 2000, the annual contribution averaged \$500 million. During the period 2001-2005, it jumped to an annual average of \$1 billion and was expected to reach almost \$2 billion in 2010. She noted that the substantial growth in Arab assistance represented 25 per cent of total contributions since 2001. That figures excluded contributions from national campaigns from the Arab region, NGOs and other informal channels, which had exceeded \$5 billion over the past decade, mostly in the form of relief, food and care. The figures also excluded the contributions of Arab States to the budget of UNRWA and the expenses associated with hosting four million Palestinian refugees.

111. Focusing on a primary assessment of the impact of the contributions to the Palestinian people, she said her analysis had led to two conflicting conclusions. The first conclusion was the highly encouraging substantial resources mobilized by the international community and the Arab countries to assist Palestinians, which amounted to \$15 billion and more than \$6 billion in the case of NGOs, over the past 15 years. However, the second conclusion was that it had been almost impossible to trace any positive impact of those resources, even when considering the substantial Palestinian private sector investments. She acknowledged there had been progress in the establishment of Palestinian Authority institutions, but the funds had failed to bring back the socio-economic performance witnessed in 1999. Citing figures, she said that the Palestinian 2009 GDP was 13 per cent lower than that of 1999. She added that the 2009 budget deficit, amounting to 39 per cent of the Palestinian GDP, was expected to be addressed by international support.

112. She said that future projections were much bleaker, considering that the Authority's payroll represented more than 59.6 per cent of its expenditures and unemployment rates amounted to 21 and 42.4% per cent in the West Bank and Gaza respectively. Based on those numbers, the mobilized resources had been wasted; they had been utilized to fund a fading peace process rather than fund the basis for a lasting peace. Donors took a reactive approach, responding to crisis after crisis rather than preparing the ground to pre-empt crises. The Palestinian Authority carried a sizeable responsibility, as it had failed to invest in development and had used the funds instead to cover expenditures. Israel's responsibility was colossal, she continued. Since the 1993 peace treaty, Israel had continued its colonial practices, including the isolation of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank from each other and from East Jerusalem, the confiscation of 85 per cent of Palestinian water and the uprooting of more than one million trees.

113. She said that, to find a way forward, efforts must be translated into massive reforms and visionary partnerships among donors, the Palestinian Authority and key sectors of Palestinian society. A main component of a paradigm shift in developmental strategies must be a capable and innovative workforce. A responsible private sector and civil society must be engaged in order to create the needed infrastructure for a flourishing Palestinian economy that nurtured creativity and innovation. All those efforts would be of zero significance, however, unless they were coupled with a political solution to end the Israeli occupation. She concluded that all hopes and dreams of regional peace would be shattered if the current opportunity was missed.

IV. Closing session

114. At the closing session, statements were made by the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations and the head of the delegation of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Right of the Palestinian People.

115. **Riyad Mansour**, Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations, said the Seminar had brought together representatives, experts and academicians from the Occupied Palestinian Territory and representatives of various United Nations agencies and NGOs to discuss the Palestinian Authority Programme and identify ways to assist the Palestinians in State-building. International donors and organizations were helping the Palestinians, not out of charity or because the Palestinians could not help themselves, but because the Palestinian people were living under occupation and the United Nations, from its inception, had been mandated to remain involved in the question of Palestine until it was resolved in all its aspects.

116. He stated that his Government had introduced an ambitious programme to end the occupation in two years by building institutions under the difficult circumstances of occupation. Experts had analyzed that programme in a critical way. Referring to one of the presentations, he said the situation of Palestinian women had been exposed. The figures had been embarrassing but the reality had to be addressed. Welcoming the criticism, he explained that the Palestinians were living under occupation and were not afraid to face criticism.

117. He opined that ending the occupation was not only the responsibility of the Palestinian people, who were at the forefront of the problem, but of Governments and United Nations agencies as well. Addressing Government representatives directly, he said it was unacceptable for them to say all the right things while Israel continued to do the wrong thing. Palestinians expected the right things to be

implemented. He said Palestinians were sick and tired of listening to Government representatives and hearing statements acknowledging and condemning the violations of Israel without offering practical ways to bring Israel into compliance.

118. The Palestinian Authority was willing to participate in proximity talks, although they were not likely to succeed. At the same time, the Palestinian Authority was not going to wait until they failed. He noted that there was a global consensus on the two-State solution and urged European and other countries around the world that were supportive of the two-State solution to recognize the State of Palestine within its 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital. Only then could the Palestinians go to the Security Council to get a “birth certificate” that would recognize the State of Palestine. In the meantime, if some countries wanted to add a caveat with some adjustments, the Palestinian Authority might be willing to consider it. After such a resolution, he concluded, Palestine would ask for membership at the United Nations and raise its flag as the 193rd Member State in 2011.

119. In his closing remarks, **Zahir Tanin**, head of the delegation of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Right of the Palestinian People, noted that, during three plenary meetings, experts had analysed the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and had made specific recommendations for the success of the Palestinian Authority’s Programme, entitled “Palestine: ending the occupation, establishing the State.”

120. He noted that many speakers had backed the Programme, highlighting the imperative of achieving economic independence and sustainable growth. They warned that the economic crisis would not abate with financial aid only and emphasized the need to work consistently on ending the occupation. The main challenge was to move away from being enabled by donor funds and remittances to a productive economy. Experts also reviewed lessons learned from the Paris Protocols, indicating possible pitfalls to be avoided in implementing the Fayyad Plan. They acknowledged the considerable achievements of the Palestinian Authority in implementing the Programme, despite the many obstacles. They agreed that the reconstruction of Gaza must be part of the overall Palestinian State-building project.

121. Experts ascertained that the goal was the creation of representative and transparent public institutions, promoting wide civil society engagement and bearing in mind the need for broad consensus-building within Palestinian society. One expert recommended mainstreaming gender issues, demanding an enhanced economic participation of and social protection for women. Other speakers looked at the role of the United Nations system, in particular that of coordinating international humanitarian assistance and UNRWA’s role as the provider of vital socio-economic services. It was suggested that international actors should coordinate their approaches towards creating a skilled workforce capable of propelling the Palestinians towards sustainable development. The public and private sectors and an engaged civil society could work together with transparent Palestinian institutions to achieve such development.

122. He stressed that the two days of deliberations had been most informative, insightful and inspiring. The accounts of the humanitarian conditions of the Palestinian people were disheartening but had strengthened the determination to provide relief to the Palestinian people. He concluded by suggesting that the international community should simultaneously keep its focus on achieving the long-term goals for Palestinian economic and social development and, above all, achieving Palestinian statehood in accordance with international legitimacy.

Annex

List of participants

Speakers

Mr. Abdelfattah Abu-Shokor	Chairman, Economics Department An-Najah University Nablus
Mr. Tarik Alami	Chief, Emerging and Conflict Related Issues Section United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia Beirut
Mr. Ali Al-Jarbawi	Minister of Planning and Administrative Development Palestinian Authority Ramallah
Mrs. Suhair Azzouni	Member of the Advisory Board, Gender Consultative Council of the Middle East and North Africa region, World Bank Paris
Mr. Mike Bailey	Representative of the Executive Committee of the Association of International Development Agency (AIDA) and Regional Advocacy Manager for the Middle East and Eastern Europe, World Vision International Jerusalem
Mr. Matthias Burchard	Head of the Representative Office in Geneva United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East Geneva
Mr. Yousef Daoud	Member of the Faculty of Economics Birzeit University Birzeit
Mr. Mahmoud Eljafari	Dean and Professor of Economics Faculty of Economics and Business Al-Quds University Jerusalem
Mr. Mahmoud Elkhafif	Coordinator, Assistance to the Palestinian People Unit United Nations Conference on Trade and Development Geneva

Mr. Maxwell Gaylard	Deputy United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for the Occupied Palestinian Territory Jerusalem
Ms. Ghania Malhis	Chairman of the Board of Trustees Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute Ramallah
Mr. Takeshi Naruse	Senior Adviser on the Middle East and Peacebuilding Japan International Cooperation Agency Tokyo
Mr. Geoff Prewitt	Team leader and institution development focal point Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People, United Nations Development Programme in the Occupied Palestinian Territory Jerusalem
Mr. Mohammed Samhour	Economist, former Senior Fellow at the Crown Center for Middle East Studies, Brandeis University, Boston, USA Former Senior Economic Adviser in the Palestinian Authority Cairo
Mr. Husam Zomlot	Research Fellow, Belfer Center Harvard Kennedy School Cambridge, USA

**Delegation of the Committee on the Exercise of the
Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People**

Mr. Zahir Tanin	Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Afghanistan to the United Nations Vice-Chairman of the Committee
Mr. Pedro Núñez Mosquera	Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations Vice-Chairman of the Committee
Mr. Saviour F. Borg	Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations Rapporteur of the Committee
Mr. Minas A. Hadjimichael	Ambassador and Permanent Representative the Republic of Cyprus to the United Nations
Mr. Riyadh Mansour	Ambassador and Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations

Representative of the Secretary-General

Mr. Maxwell Gaylard
United Nations Deputy Special Coordinator for the
Middle East Peace Process and United Nations Resident and
Humanitarian Coordinator for the Occupied Palestinian Territory
Jerusalem

Governments

Algeria	Mrs. Taous Feroukhi, Ambassador to Vienna Mr. Said Khelifi, Minister Counsellor Permanent Mission to the United Nations Office at Vienna
Argentina	Mr. Ariel González, Counsellor Permanent Mission to the United Nations Office at Vienna
Belarus	Mr. Vadim Pisarevich, Counsellor Mr. Oleg Shloma, First Secretary Permanent Mission to the United Nations Office at Vienna
China	Ms. Chen Peijie, Counsellor Permanent Mission to the United Nations Office at Vienna
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	Mr. Ri Il Chul, Counsellor Mr. Hong Chang Bom, First Secretary Permanent Mission to the United Nations Office at Vienna
Germany	Mr. Thomas Mützelburg, Legation Counsellor Ms. Julia Kreienkamp, Intern Permanent Mission to the United Nations Office at Vienna
Greece	Mr. Petros Panagiotopoulos, First Counsellor Embassy in Vienna
India	Mr. Puneet Agrawal, Counsellor Permanent Mission to the United Nations Office at Vienna
Lebanon	Mr. Fadi Hajj Ali, Counsellor, Chef de cabinet Ministry of Foreign Affairs Mr. Ishaya El-Khoury, Ambassador and Permanent Representative Mr. Salim Baddoura, First Secretary and alternate Permanent Representative Embassy in Vienna
Jordan	Mr. Makram Queisi, Ambassador to Vienna Ms. Souhad Khriesat, Embassy in Vienna

Malta	Mr. Christopher Grima, Ambassador to Vienna Mr. Bernard Charles Mifsud, First Secretary Permanent Mission to the United Nations Office at Vienna
Namibia	Ms. Aino Stella Kuume, First Secretary Permanent Mission to the United Nations Office at Vienna
Nicaragua	Mrs. Isolda Frixione Miranda, Ambassador to Vienna Permanent Mission to the United Nations Office at Vienna
Philippines	Ms. Charlie P. Manangan, Minister and Consul General, Deputy Permanent Representative to Austria
Spain	Mr. Miguel Alonso, Counsellor Ms. Tamara Zabala, Counsellor Permanent Mission to the United Nations Office at Vienna
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Switzerland	Mr. Alberto Groff, Counsellor Ms. Caterina Albisetti, Trainee Permanent Mission to the United Nations Office at Vienna
Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Bashar Safiey Permanent Mission to the United Nations Office at Vienna
Turkey	Ms. Sedat Önal, Deputy Director General for Middle East Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**Non-Member State having received a standing invitation
to participate as observer in the sessions and the work
of the General Assembly and maintaining a permanent
observer mission at Headquarters**

Holy See

**Entities having received a standing invitation to participate
as observers in the sessions and the work of the
General Assembly and maintaining permanent
observer missions at Headquarters**

Palestine	Dr. Zuheir Elwazer, Ambassador Mr. Hazem Shabat, Alternate Permanent Observer Ms. Safa Shabat, Adviser Permanent Observer Mission of Palestine to the United Nations Office at Vienna Mr. Jamal Zakout, Adviser to the Prime Minister on Media and Civil Society Affairs in Ramallah
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Intergovernmental Organizations

African Union	Amb. Khadija R. Masri, Permanent Observer in Geneva
League of Arab States	Dr. Mikhail Wehbe, Head of the Mission Mr. Ali Maan, Press Adviser Permanent Observer Office to the United Nations Office at Vienna
Organization of the Islamic Conference	Dr. Shaher Awawdeh, Palestine Desk Officer General Secretariat Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

United Nations Organs, Agencies and Bodies

International Atomic Energy Agency	Ms. Margit Bruck-Friedrich, External Relations and Policy Officer, Office of External Relations and Policy Coordination Vienna
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development	Mr. Mahmoud Elkhafif, Coordinator, Assistance to the Palestinian People Unit Geneva
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights	Mr. Kevin Turner, Middle East and North Africa Field Operations and Technical Cooperation Division Geneva

Civil society organizations

Al-Haq – Law in the Service of Man	Mr. Wesam Ahmad, Advocacy Officer Ramallah
Early Childhood Resource Center	Mr. Nabil Sublaban, General Director Jerusalem
Jewish Voice for A Just Peace/Women in Black	Ms. Paula Abrams-Hourani, Founding Member Vienna
Palestinian Centre for Human Rights	Mr. Raji Sourani, Director Gaza City
Palestinian National Committee against the Wall	Mr. Said Yaqin Dawoud, Coordinator Lecturer, Al-Quds Open University Jerusalem
The Palestinian Return Centre	Mr. Arafet Boujemaa, Office Manager Mr. Nasim Ahmed, Researcher London

Palestinians without Frontiers	Mr. Mahmoud H. Eljammali, Chairman Mr. Serri M. H. Arafat, Managing Editor Gaza
Palestinian Youth Network	Mr. Saif Abukeshek, General Coordinator Madrid
Popular Struggle Coordination Committee	Mr. Jonathan Pollak, Media Coordinator Tel Aviv
Public Interest Lawyers	Mr. Phil Shiner, Supervisor Birmingham, United Kingdom
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Universal Peace Federation	Mr. Joseph Reuben Silverbird, Ambassador for Peace Vienna

Media

Arab Press	Mr. Amir Bayati Vienna
Jungle World	Mr. Karl Pfeifer Berlin
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