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Bulletin
**on action by the United Nations system and
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relevant to the question of Palestine**

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*The Bulletin can be found in the United Nations Information System
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I. SECRETARY-GENERAL APPOINTS JAMES W. RAWLEY AS DEPUTY SPECIAL COORDINATOR FOR THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS

In a press release (SG/A/1369, BIO/4401) issued on 6 September 2012, the Secretary-General announced the appointment of James W. Rawley as Deputy Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and United Nations Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Excerpts of the press release are reproduced below:

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon today announced the appointment of James W. Rawley of the United States as Deputy Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, at the level of Assistant Secretary-General. Mr. Rawley will also serve as United Nations Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

The new Deputy Special Coordinator succeeds Maxwell Gaylard of Australia, who completed his assignment on 31 August. The Secretary-General is grateful to

Mr. Gaylard for his longstanding and distinguished service in the United Nations.

Mr. Rawley brings over 30 years of humanitarian and development experience with the United Nations, as well as a crisis prevention perspective acquired in a number of complex situations, including in Yemen and Myanmar, having served most recently as the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Egypt.

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II. SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSES HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL'S TWENTY-FIRST REGULAR SESSION

In his remarks at the opening of the Human Rights Council's twenty-first regular session that was held on 10 September 2012, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon also expressed concern on the Palestine question (SG/SM/14497, HR/14).

I also remain concerned about the unfulfilled human rights of the Palestinian people, in particular the right to self-determination. A sustainable solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict requires a negotiated agreement that ends the 1967 occupation and results in an independent, sovereign, democratic and viable Palestinian State living side by side in peace and security with Israel and its other neighbours. This objective must be supported by developments on the ground, including respect for human rights and international law, and concerted efforts to build the foundations of a future Palestinian State.

The situation in Gaza remains tense and troubling with indiscriminate rocket fire from Gaza and Israeli airstrikes and incursions. Serious human rights, humanitarian and socioeconomic problems only add to the immense human suffering. I urge Israel to lift its harsh restrictions in order to ease the plight of civilians and bring an end to the closure. Keeping a large and dense population in unremitting poverty is in nobody's interest except that of the most extreme radicals in the region.

III. SECRETARY-GENERAL REPORTS ON THE PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF THE PALESTINE QUESTION

The Secretary-General on 12 September 2012 submitted the report entitled “Peaceful settlement of the Question of Palestine (A/67/364, S/2012/70) in accordance with General Assembly resolution 66/17. The Report covered the developments during the period from September 2011 through August 2012. The observations of the Secretary-General are reproduced below.

Observations

7. Efforts to achieve the peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine resulted in little progress during the reporting period, and confidence between the parties and in the political process continued to erode. Despite efforts by the United Nations, the Quartet and individual Member States to provide facilitation, negotiations remained at an impasse. At the heart of the unwillingness of the parties to engage in direct talks was a lack of trust and disagreement over the conditions that would allow them to do so. The Palestinians also submitted an application for membership in the United Nations and acquired membership in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

8. The situation on the ground remained challenging, in particular for the population living under closure in Gaza, while Israel continued to face the threat of rocket fire. In the West Bank, tensions persisted, while settlement activity continued to accelerate. Altogether, the situation on the ground presented a growing cause for concern over the viability of the two-State solution. At the same time, the Palestinians continued to implement an ambitious State-building programme. They also briefly resumed their efforts towards reuniting the West Bank and Gaza, albeit with limited success at reconciliation.

9. On 23 September, the Quartet issued a statement that called for the

resumption of direct bilateral Israeli-Palestinian negotiations. To that end, the Quartet outlined steps to help build the trust needed for the parties to return to the negotiating table. Specifically, a preparatory meeting was called within a month for the parties to agree on an agenda and a method of proceeding. The Quartet made clear its expectation that the parties would come forward with comprehensive proposals on territory and security within three months of resumed negotiations and that the goal was to make substantial progress within six months and reach an agreement by the end of 2012. The Quartet also stressed the need for the parties to refrain from provocations and reminded them of their obligations under the road map.

10. Within the framework of the Quartet statement of 23 September, Quartet envoys and the Quartet Representative, Tony Blair, met on three occasions in Jerusalem with Israeli and Palestinian representatives, on 26 October, 14 November and 14 December. Quartet envoys stressed the importance of a direct exchange between the parties without delay or preconditions, beginning with a preparatory meeting and leading to the presentation of comprehensive proposals on territory and security. Envoys called upon the parties to create an environment conducive to restarting talks and urged both to refrain from provocative actions.

11. After 15 months of absence of direct talks, Israeli and Palestinian negotiators embarked on a series of

meetings on 3 January 2012 in Amman under the auspices of King Abdullah II of Jordan and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Nasser Judeh. The parties began discussing important issues related to territory and security, in accordance with the Quartet statement of 23 September. They also discussed ways to build confidence and create a positive environment for the talks to lead to substantive negotiations. Following that first meeting, a series of direct preparatory talks were held under Jordanian auspices until 25 January. During my visit to Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory on 1 and 2 February, I expressed my appreciation to King Abdullah for his initiative and commended the Palestinian and Israeli leaders on these important first steps, urging the parties to build on them to launch meaningful negotiations to reach an agreement by the end of 2012. However, while quiet meetings between the negotiators have continued to date, they have yet to lead to the renewal of direct negotiations.

12. During the meeting of the Arab Peace Initiative follow-up committee on 12 February and of the Palestine Liberation Organization Central Committee on 20 February, the Palestinians reiterated their position that direct talks should not resume unless all settlement activity was halted, Israel committed to a two-State solution based on the 1967 lines and Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails were released. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Netanyahu continued to insist that Israel wanted to continue the talks, but without preconditions.

13. The Quartet met in New York on 12 March and again in Washington, D.C., on 11 April to reflect on those developments and forge a way forward that would build on the Quartet statement of 23 September. Quartet principals heard from Mr. Judeh on

ongoing Jordanian efforts to promote exploratory talks. After a pause, negotiators met again in Amman in early April and agreed to an exchange of letters outlining their positions. As agreed by the parties, on 17 April a letter from President Abbas was delivered to Prime Minister Netanyahu, who responded on 12 May. The exchange was kept confidential and led to quiet direct engagement. Quartet envoys continued to work with the parties to encourage them to step up direct contacts and refrain from counterproductive actions.

14. A number of high-level visits also took place to encourage the parties to resume talks. King Abdullah visited Ramallah on 21 November 2011. The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton, visited Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory from 24 to 26 January. On 25 and 26 June, the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, held meetings in Israel and with President Abbas in Bethlehem. In Paris on 6 July, President Abbas met with the United States Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, the President of France, François Hollande, Ms. Ashton, and the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom, William Hague. Ms. Clinton later visited Israel on 16 and 17 July.

15. At the same time, the Arab follow-up committee held consultations in Doha on 22 July, in which it supported a Palestinian approach to the United Nations to seek further recognition without specifying a timeline. Arab League representatives asked the committee to prepare the appeal and report back at the next meeting in Cairo, on 6 September.

16. In parallel to these developments in the peace process, the Palestinians initiated a number of actions in United Nations forums.

On 23 September 2011, during the general debate of the General Assembly, President Abbas submitted an application for membership for a State of Palestine in the United Nations. In accordance with the Charter and the rules of procedure of the Assembly, I transmitted the application to the President of the Security Council on the same day and sent a copy to the President of the Assembly. The report of the Committee on the Admission of New Members of 11 November (S/2011/705) stated that the Committee was unable to make a unanimous recommendation to the Security Council. The issue remains before the Council.

17. On 31 October 2011, the UNESCO General Conference voted in favour of Palestinian membership. The decision was the prerogative of member States. I indicated that I wished to work with member States on practical solutions to preserve the financial resources of UNESCO. I also urged all parties to approach this issue wisely in determining a course of action. Following the vote, the Government of Israel temporarily froze the transfer of tax and customs revenues that it was collecting on behalf of the Palestinian National Authority, which represented two thirds of the Authority's annual revenues. Transfers resumed on 30 November.

18. Against this backdrop, the Palestinians continued to advance their State-building programme, albeit limited to the territory under the control of the Palestinian National Authority, which excluded Area C, East Jerusalem and Gaza. This formed an essential complement to the political process. A strong international consensus emerged that the Authority was capable of running a State. The Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, at its meetings on 18 September 2011 in New York and on 21 March 2012 in

Brussels, confirmed the assessments contained in reports of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, which had concluded that the Government functions of Palestine were now sufficient for the functioning of a State. However, the World Bank report of April 2012 also indicated that, while the Palestinian Authority had had considerable success in building the institutions of a future State, it had made less progress in developing a sustainable economic base, particularly in terms of private sector development. In addition, political and financial pressure on the Authority continued to grow throughout the reporting period, placing its sustainability increasingly at risk.

19. Palestinians also made renewed attempts to advance on the issue of reconciliation. Bearing in mind Security Council resolutions 1850 (2008) and 1860 (2009), I continued to support efforts to advance Palestinian unity within the framework of the commitments of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the positions of the Quartet and the Arab Peace Initiative. Reconciliation on this basis and Israeli-Palestinian peace talks need not be mutually exclusive, and a united Palestinian polity is necessary for the viability of the two-State solution. I have welcomed the efforts made to this effect, notably by Egypt.

20. On 5 February 2012 in Doha, President Abbas and Hamas leader Khaled Meshal agreed to form a transitional government of technocrats to be headed by President Abbas as Prime Minister. President Abbas emphasized that that government would adhere to his political programme and to all previous PLO commitments. However, opposition to the agreement within Hamas in Gaza prevented concrete results until 20 May, when a new formula for progress on reconciliation was

achieved with the assistance of Egyptian mediation. Under the agreement, Fatah and Hamas delegations met in Cairo on 6, 7 and 15 June to discuss the way forward. As a first step in the organization of general elections, the Palestinian Central Election Commission resumed operations in Gaza on 28 May with full cooperation from the de facto authorities and initiated plans to register voters in Gaza between 3 and 14 July. However, voter registration was suspended by Hamas on 2 July, and on 10 July the Palestinian Authority called for municipal elections to be organized in the West Bank only on 20 October 2012. Palestinian reconciliation has since been stalled.

21. At the same time, significant political changes occurred in Israel. On 8 May 2012, Prime Minister Netanyahu formed a new governing coalition with the opposition Kadima party. The new coalition represented one of the largest majorities in the history of the Knesset, holding 94 of its 120 seats. It also generated some hope that Prime Minister Netanyahu would, as was provided for in the new coalition agreement, have greater political space to pursue a “responsible peace process”. The coalition lasted 70 days, until 17 July, when the Deputy Prime Minister and Kadima Chairman, Shaul Mofaz, announced that his party was leaving the governing coalition following disagreements over a draft law seeking to mandate military service for a portion of the ultra-orthodox community.

22. Throughout the reporting period, developments on the ground continued to damage confidence and made the resumption of direct negotiations very difficult. Settlements, including in East Jerusalem, expanded and violence continued, with clashes between Palestinians and the Israel Defense Forces, between Palestinians and settlers and between settlers

and the Israeli forces. A number of other sensitive issues likewise fuelled tensions, such as the issue of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli custody, protests and the closure of Gaza.

23. The situation in occupied East Jerusalem remained tense. The question of Jerusalem is a final status issue that requires a negotiated solution. I have consistently emphasized that a way must be found for the city to emerge, through negotiations, as the capital of two States, Israel and Palestine, with arrangements for holy sites acceptable to all. It is equally important that political and religious authorities on both sides continue to ensure that the cultural and religious rights of all are duly respected.

24. Several times, I expressed my deep concern at continued efforts to advance planning for new Israeli settlements in occupied East Jerusalem. For example, on 27 September 2011, the Government of Israel announced the construction of 1,100 housing units in East Jerusalem settlements. In November, Israel publicized its intention to invite tenders for the construction of 1,557 new units in East Jerusalem. I have reiterated that all settlement activity in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, whether on private land or elsewhere, is contrary to international law and to the obligations of Israel under the Quartet road map. It prejudices final status negotiations, makes the two-State solution all the more difficult to achieve and must stop.

25. The expansion of settlements, which undermines the territorial basis for a future Palestinian State and the credibility of Palestinian moderates, is of particular concern. During the reporting period, the Government of Israel approved tenders for the construction of approximately 2,700 residential units in settlements in the West

Bank, including East Jerusalem, and retroactively legalized others. Moreover, the Israeli authorities did not act effectively against the construction of illegal outposts on private Palestinian land. On 12 December, the Government of Israel approved the construction of 40 houses and a farm near the settlement of Efrat, near Bethlehem, and on 17 December the Government of Israel announced its intention to issue construction tenders for 1,028 housing units in the settlements of Har Homa, Beitar Illit and Givat Ze'ev. Construction in such sensitive areas is especially concerning, as it impedes the natural development of Palestinian urban centres.

26. On 22 March, among other decisions, the Human Rights Council decided to dispatch a fact-finding mission to examine the impact of Israeli settlements on Palestinian human rights. Israel is highly critical of the Council's action and has suspended its cooperation with the Council.

27. Settler violence increased throughout the year. It is deeply troubling that attacks by settlers on Palestinians and their property have become a systematic occurrence — often but not exclusively in the context of anticipated Government action against illegal settlement construction. Settler attacks on Palestinians and their properties resulted in injuries to 167 Palestinians, including 26 children, during the reporting period. Israeli extremists also attacked personnel of the Israel Defense Forces in the West Bank.

28. Area C remains critical to the viability of a future Palestinian State. We must ensure a broadening of community-driven planning in Area C, as well as the provision of basic services, including in education and health. The United Nations is already engaged on these issues at both the

policy and programming levels. Moreover, Israel should give due consideration to the transfer of land in Area C to the Palestinian Authority, particularly in areas surrounding major urban centres, to facilitate more suitable urban development and relieve the acute pressure on the land and housing market.

29. The demolitions and evictions that took place in Area C during the reporting period are of particular concern and were condemned by the international community. Palestinians require access to a fair planning and zoning regime so as not to resort to the building of unauthorized structures that lead to unjustified demolitions, which often affect the most vulnerable people. Demolitions have led to the displacement of some 586 individuals, including 246 children, in the West Bank and East Jerusalem during the reporting period. Overall, more needs to be done to ease access and movement throughout the West Bank, including Area C, the Jordan Valley and Gaza. In a comprehensive closure survey completed at the end of June, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs documented 542 obstacles blocking Palestinian movement within the West Bank, including 61 permanently staffed checkpoints (excluding checkpoints on the Green Line), 25 partial checkpoints (staffed on an ad hoc basis) and 436 unstaffed physical obstacles, such as roadblocks, earth mounds and trenches.

30. During my visit to Gaza on 2 February 2012, I was struck once again by the fragility and unsustainable nature of the situation. I called upon Israel to implement further measures to lift the closure of Gaza and allow the unrestricted import of key building materials. I also continue to call for the free movement of people into and out of Gaza and the full reopening of all official land crossings, as well as the expansion of

their capacity. These changes could be applied with due consideration for the legitimate security concerns of Israel and could make a significant difference in the lives of many Gazans; they would also reduce the illicit tunnel trade. Indiscriminate rocket fire must also stop, and Israel must show maximum restraint.

31. The full implementation of Security Council resolution 1860 (2009) and the recovery and long-term economic growth of Gaza remain fundamental objectives of the United Nations. Some significant progress was made towards this goal, but much more needs to be done. A total of \$350 million worth of United Nations reconstruction work in Gaza was approved by the Government of Israel during the reporting period. This has had a positive effect for those receiving services as well as on short-term employment. However, the economic benefits of increased employment will end with the conclusion of these works. Deeper and more fundamental change is therefore required to enable a functioning Gazan economy, beginning with authorizing exports to Israel and other countries, as well as transfers to and from the West Bank. Without this essential step, the future of Gaza will remain tenuous at best.

32. There are growing funding challenges for United Nations operations. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), for example, requires an additional \$50 million to meet the shortfall in its core budget, which, if not bridged, may lead to the suspension of the Agency's essential services, in particular its ability to operate schools and health clinics and provide poverty relief. In addition to the \$50 million required to keep the Agency operational, UNRWA launched an emergency appeal for the occupied

Palestinian territory in order to respond to emergency needs in 2012. This appeal currently falls short by \$173 million, including \$7.5 million urgently needed to meet food procurement distribution in Gaza for the remainder of 2012. This funding shortfall has already resulted in the reduction of key poverty alleviation interventions and the cancellation of the UNRWA "Summer Games" for the children of Gaza and, if not addressed, will result in further cuts to humanitarian services provided by UNRWA under the Emergency Appeal across the occupied Palestinian territory.

33. I urge donors to continue to fund United Nations reconstruction work in Gaza through the Palestinian Authority/United Nations Trust Fund. I also urge the Government of Israel to continue to grant approvals for outstanding United Nations reconstruction work in the Gaza Strip and emphasize once more that there should be a broader opening for the entry of all construction materials into Gaza.

34. Preserving calm in Gaza and southern Israel continues to be crucial for improvements there and for the overall political atmosphere. The fragility of the relative calm was once again demonstrated on a number of occasions throughout the reporting period by dangerous escalations taking place on 29 and 31 October, from 9 to 13 March and on 17 and 18 June. During the reporting period, 751 rockets were fired from Gaza, including 138 Grad rockets, as well as 177 mortar shells. Many rockets directed at populated areas in Israel were intercepted by the Iron Dome system. Israel Defense Forces conducted 57 incursions and 174 air strikes into Gaza, resulting in the deaths of dozens of Palestinians, including some 16 civilians. More than 225 Palestinian civilians were injured, including 3 children. A total of 59 militants were

killed, and 79 were injured. One Israeli soldier and one Israeli civilian were killed, and 27 Israelis were injured. Again, I unequivocally condemn these indiscriminate rocket attacks from Gaza into Israel and call for their complete cessation. I also urge Israel to show maximum restraint. All should fully observe their obligations regarding the protection of civilians.

35. A final area of concern is the Sinai Peninsula, where there have been a growing number of incidents. In February, Egyptian security forces seized a number of anti-aircraft missiles and explosives, which were being readied for transfer to the Gaza Strip. Soldiers of the Israel Defense Forces removed explosive devices on the Israeli-Egypt border and intercepted suspected smugglers. I reiterate that weapons transfers into Gaza must stop. In addition, on 16 June two rockets were shot from the Sinai into south Israel, and on 18 June at least three militants attacked Israeli workers constructing the security fence at the border. One Israeli worker was killed and two were injured, prompting the above-mentioned escalation in violence on 17 and 18 June. On 5 August, a militant attack on an Egyptian security post near Kerem Shalom killed 16 Egyptian border guards. The attackers subsequently breached the Israeli border before being intercepted. I strongly condemned this terror attack. On 15 August, one Grad missile fired from the Sinai landed near Eilat in southern Israel.

36. On 18 October, Israel and Hamas implemented the first stage of a prisoner exchange agreement. Israeli Sergeant Gilad Shalit, held in Gaza without international access since 25 June 2006, was released by Hamas. In exchange, 1,028 Palestinian prisoners — many of whom had been imprisoned for involvement in attacks on Israelis — were released, mostly to Gaza, but also to the West Bank, including East

Jerusalem, the occupied Syrian Golan and Israel. Having long called for the end of the unacceptable captivity of Gilad Shalit and for the release of Palestinian prisoners, I welcomed the releases as a significant humanitarian breakthrough.

37. The hunger strike by more than 1,500 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli custody, which started on 17 April to protest prison conditions and the application of administrative detentions, ended on 14 May with an agreement to address prisoners' concerns. I was pleased that Israel had taken steps to implement this agreement with respect to the use of solitary confinement, family visits and the practice of administrative detention. Israel also delivered the remains of 91 Palestinians buried in Israeli-controlled areas. Despite the agreement that ended the hunger strike, and amid reports that some additional Palestinians have been put in administrative detention, a small number of prisoners are reported not to have ended their hunger strikes. I would like to state my concern for their well-being.

38. There are more than 300 Palestinians being held under administrative detention. Administrative detention should be used only in the most limited number of cases, for as short a period as possible, and in exceptional cases. Those detained must be charged and brought to trial or released without delay.

39. In the West Bank, both the Palestinian application for membership in the United Nations and the prisoner release in October prompted significant public demonstrations but few acts of violence, thanks to the efforts of the Palestinian Authority police. However, it was disappointing that the language used by Hamas regarding the prisoner release lauded violent resistance. Demonstrations against

the barrier in the occupied West Bank continued on a regular basis, as the barrier's route continued to deviate significantly from the 1967 Green Line in contravention of the 2004 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice. The barrier restricted Palestinian access to East Jerusalem, key social services and agricultural land. Protests against the barrier by Palestinian, Israeli and foreign activists largely remained peaceful. The Board of the United Nations Register of Damage Caused by the Construction of the Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory submitted a progress report on 8 June 2012.

40. Tensions and violent incidents continued throughout the reporting period. Citing security reasons, the Israel Defense Forces conducted 1,092 operations in the West Bank, during which 718 Palestinians were injured, including 88 children, and 2,062 Palestinians were arrested. More than 53 personnel of the Israeli forces were injured by Palestinians. On 10 December, a Palestinian protesting the takeover of privately owned land by Israeli settlers died from wounds sustained in Nabi Saleh when an Israeli soldier fired a tear gas canister at close range from the armoured vehicle at which the protester had been throwing stones. A total of 61 Palestinians and 3 Israeli soldiers were injured during similar protests, and an investigation was launched by the Israeli authorities. I stress that the right to peaceful protest must be upheld and that protests should be kept strictly non-violent.

41. On 30 March, on the occasion of Land Day, large demonstrations were held in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, as well as in Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon and, to a smaller extent, in Egypt and the Syrian Arab Republic. Clashes between demonstrators and the Israel Defense Forces resulted in 1 Palestinian killed and some 180 wounded. The Israeli forces used crowd

control measures aimed at minimizing the number of casualties. Palestinian security forces in the West Bank and Gaza also took critical measures to avoid bloodshed.

42. During the reporting period, a total of 78 Palestinians were killed, including 54 militants, while 2,849 Palestinians, including 247 children, were injured; 2 Israelis were killed, including 1 civilian; and 43 personnel of the Israeli forces and 39 Israeli civilians were injured, illustrating the continuing cost of the ongoing conflict.

43. Despite these challenges, the efforts to build robust state institutions and revive the Palestinian economy have brought real security and economic improvements. The Palestinian Authority also continued to make praiseworthy efforts to maintain law and order in areas under its control and strengthen its security capacity. In November, an eighth battalion of internationally trained Palestinian security forces was deployed, bringing their total number to more than 4,000. In a positive gesture, 51 alleged militants being held in protective custody by the Palestinian police in the West Bank were granted amnesty by Israel on 4 November 2011. On 10 February 2012, for the first time in 15 years, Palestinian National Security Forces, in coordination with Israel, enforced law and order in the H-2 area of Hebron, which is under full Israeli control.

44. I commend President Abbas and Prime Minister Fayyad for this achievement. At the same time, I am concerned by reports of arbitrary detention being carried out by Palestinian security forces and reports of ill treatment in detention centres in Gaza. Moreover, in April and May, the de facto authorities in Gaza carried out five executions without the approval of President Abbas, which is required by Palestinian Basic Law. I would urge the Palestinian

Authority to ensure that it fulfils its responsibilities with full respect for international human rights laws.

45. The Palestinian Authority has achieved what it set out to do two years ago, and this must be noted, preserved and built upon. However, I am now concerned about the ability of the Palestinian Authority to maintain these gains in the light of its increasingly dire financial situation.

46. At the start of July, the Palestinian Finance Minister announced that the Palestinian Authority could not pay all June salaries to its 150,000 employees on time. Israeli authorities transferred half of the monthly value added tax collection to the Palestinian Authority two weeks early in order to assist with the payment of salaries ahead of the holy month of Ramadan.

47. I continue to call upon donors to provide timely assistance to sustain this agenda. Donor support for the Palestinian Authority was insufficient during the reporting period, affecting the Authority's ability to meet its financial obligations, including the payment of salaries. I also strongly encouraged the Government of Israel to take all measures necessary to facilitate growth, including further easing of access and movement within, into and out of the West Bank for both goods and people. On 17 July 2012, Israel approved 5,000 permits for Palestinian construction workers to work in Israel, in addition to the 34,250 permits already issued for Palestinian workers to work there. In a noteworthy achievement, after lengthy discussions between the Palestinian Authority and the Ministry of Finance of Israel, arrangements with respect to the transfer of goods between Israel and the Palestinian Authority and related tax procedures that would take effect on 1 January 2013 were concluded on 31 July. These initiatives are welcome. Yet,

more needs to be done to ease access and movement and enable economic growth throughout the occupied Palestinian territory, including Area C and Gaza.

48. I would like to express my deep thanks and appreciation to the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Robert H. Serry, as well as to the Commissioner-General of UNRWA, Filippo Grandi. I also pay tribute to all United Nations staff who work under difficult and at times dangerous circumstances in the service of the United Nations.

49. Peace and Palestinian statehood are long overdue. I am acutely conscious of the unsustainable status quo, which is thrown into sharper relief by the profound political changes in the region. More than 45 years since the beginning of the occupation, the keeping of a large population in profound poverty is in nobody's interest except that of the most extreme radicals in the region. I remain convinced that direct and meaningful negotiations are the main avenue towards a comprehensive, fair and lasting solution that fulfils the aspirations of Israel and the Palestinians, including an end to occupation and conflict and a just and agreed solution to the plight of Palestinian refugees.

50. Given the dramatic developments in the region, progress on the Israeli-Palestinian track is of even greater urgency and would have an important positive impact on the region. It has been a year since the Security Council was presented with the Palestinian application for membership in the United Nations, and we are increasingly moving away from a two-State solution into a one-State reality, which would diminish the prospects of regional peace in the spirit of the Arab Peace Initiative. The continuing negative trends reported at present are further manifestations that this reality is consistently undermining

our common goal of a negotiated two-State solution that will end the conflict and the occupation that started in 1967.

51. I am seriously concerned by the lack of progress during the reporting period in the search for a negotiated solution that would bring Israel and the Palestinians closer towards durable peace and security, including the realization of the legitimate aspiration of Palestinians to a State of their own and of Israel to live within recognized and secure borders. The failure of the parties to follow the steps outlined by the Quartet on 23 September 2011 is of grave concern. The outlines of an agreement have long been clear. What is important now is for the parties to engage seriously on substance. I call upon Israeli and Palestinian leaders to show vision, courage and determination to reach a historical peace agreement that would meet the legitimate aspirations of the people on both sides.

52. To this end, it is my sincere hope that the parties pursue vigorously all efforts to create an environment that is conducive to the resumption of direct and meaningful negotiations. In particular, I urge Israel to cease all settlement activity in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and to take concrete steps to further ease the numerous restrictions in place both in the West Bank and Gaza. I also strongly encourage all Palestinians on the path of non-violence and unity in line with past PLO commitments. I call upon them to

pursue their efforts to improve law and order and combat extremism and incitement against Israel, and to continue to build strong and democratic institutions, which are essential to a viable, independent Palestinian State. In a highly volatile environment, it is crucial that any outbreaks of violence that could undermine political efforts be prevented and that the parties refrain from provocative steps on the ground. The international community must also play its role by shaping a legitimate and balanced framework that offers a credible political path forward, combined with far-reaching steps on the ground. The international community should understand that its own efforts in pursuit of this goal will increasingly lack credibility if we continue to fail to take the steps necessary to enable an environment conducive to serious engagement.

53. As Secretary-General, I will continue to ensure that the United Nations works towards the establishment of an independent, democratic, contiguous and viable Palestinian State living side by side in peace with a secure Israel in the framework of a comprehensive regional settlement consistent with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 1397 (2002), 1515 (2003) and 1860 (2009), and in accordance with the Quartet road map, the Arab Peace Initiative and the principle of land for peace.

IV. SECRETARY-GENERAL REPORTS ON ISRAELI PRACTICES AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE IN THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY, INCLUDING EAST JERUSALEM

The Secretary-General on 14 September 2012 submitted the report entitled “A/67/372” in accordance with General Assembly resolution 66/79 under item 53 of its provisional agenda. The Report covered the developments during the period from July 2011 through June 2012. The recommendations of the Secretary-General are reproduced below.

Recommendations

A. The situation in Gaza

47. The Government of Israel should fully lift the blockade of Gaza, using means to address security concerns that do not violate the human rights of Gazans. The lifting of the blockade should include permitting the exportation of goods, should ensure that all necessary reconstruction materials can be delivered and should facilitate the movement of people to and from Gaza.

48. The Government of Israel should review methods used by IDF to enforce access restrictions on land and sea in Gaza. The methods should be consistent with Israel's international legal obligations and should not include the use of live ammunition against unarmed civilians. The Government of Israel should adopt measures that effectively ensure that any attack by IDF respects the principles of conduct of hostilities, namely, distinction, proportionality and precaution.

49. Palestinian armed groups must comply with international humanitarian law and immediately cease the indiscriminate firing of rockets and mortars. As a matter of priority, they should ensure that no such activities are carried out in densely populated areas.

B. The situation in the West Bank including East Jerusalem

50. The Government of Israel should take all necessary measures to prevent incidents of excessive use of force. This should include a review of regulations on the use of weapons and crowd-control means in operations carried out by all Israel security forces, to ensure that these regulations are in line with Israel's international legal obligations.

51. The Government of Israel must respect the right of individuals to peaceful assembly in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. The use of force against peaceful protesters should cease immediately, and Military Order 101 must be repealed or modified to ensure compliance with international human rights law.

52. Injuries and deaths caused by Israeli security forces should be fully investigated in line with international standards of promptness, independence, impartiality and thoroughness. Individuals found responsible must be held accountable and victims compensated.

53. The Government of Israel should commission an independent and thorough review of its policy of administrative detention, with a view to terminating the policy.

54. The Government of Israel should treat Palestinian children in detention with due consideration to their age, in accordance with international standards.

55. Israeli policies resulting in the forcible transfer of civilians within and from the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including the revocation of residency rights of Palestinians from East Jerusalem, evictions, home demolitions and the planned transfer of Bedouin communities, should be terminated immediately. Israeli planning and zoning policies and practices should be immediately modified to ensure adequate housing for all Palestinian residents of Area C and East Jerusalem.

56. The Government of Israel should fully comply with the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, in particular by immediately halting the construction of the Wall and dismantling or rerouting the constructed section to the Green Line.

...

V. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ADOPTS TWO RESOLUTIONS ON PALESTINIAN WOMEN AND ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL REPERCUSSIONS OF THE ISRAELI OCCUPATION

During its Substantive session of 2012 and under Agenda item 14 (a), the Economic and Social Council on 14 September 2012 adopted resolution 2012/25 entitled “Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women”. The resolution that was recommended by the Commission on the Status of Women (E/2012/27 and Corr.1) is reproduced below. On the same day, the Council considered Agenda item 11, adopting resolution 2012/23 entitled “Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan, the text of which is reproduced below:

2012/25. Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women

The Economic and Social Council,

*Having considered with appreciation
the report of the Secretary-General,¹*

*Recalling the Nairobi Forward-looking
Strategies for the Advancement of Women,²
in particular paragraph 260 concerning
Palestinian women and children, the Beijing
Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth
World Conference on Women³ and the*

outcome documents of the twenty-third
special session of the General Assembly,
entitled “Women 2000: gender equality,
development and peace for the twenty-first
century”,⁴

Recalling also its resolution 2011/18 of
26 July 2011 and other relevant United
Nations resolutions, including General
Assembly resolution 57/337 of 3 July 2003
on the prevention of armed conflict and
Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) of
31 October 2000 on women and peace and
security,

*Recalling further the Declaration on the
Elimination of Violence against Women⁵ as*

¹ E/CN.6/2012/6.

² Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, 15–26 July 1985 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.85.IV.10), chap. I, sect. A.

³ Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

⁴ General Assembly resolution S-23/2, annex, and resolution S-23/3, annex.

⁵ See General Assembly resolution 48/104.

it concerns the protection of civilian populations,

Recalling the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,⁶ the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights⁶ and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,⁷ and reaffirming that these human rights instruments must be respected in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Expressing deep concern about the grave situation of Palestinian women in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, resulting from the severe impact of the ongoing illegal Israeli occupation and all of its manifestations,

Expressing grave concern about the increased difficulties being faced by Palestinian women and girls living under Israeli occupation, including the continuation of home demolitions, evictions of Palestinians, the revocation of residency rights and arbitrary detention and imprisonment, as well as high rates of poverty and unemployment, food insecurity, inadequate water supply, incidents of domestic violence, and declining health, education and living standards, including the rising incidence of trauma and the decline in their psychological well-being, and expressing grave concern about the dire humanitarian crisis and insecurity and instability on the ground in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, in particular in the Gaza Strip,

Deploring the dire economic and social conditions of Palestinian women and girls in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the systematic violation of their human rights resulting from the severe impact of ongoing illegal

Israeli practices, including displacement and the confiscation of land, particularly in connection with the construction and expansion of settlements and the wall, which continue to constitute a major obstacle to peace on the basis of the two-State solution, and the continued imposition of closures and restrictions on the movement of persons and goods, which have detrimentally affected their right to health care, including access of pregnant women to health services for antenatal care and safe delivery, education, employment, development and freedom of movement,

Gravely concerned, in particular, about the critical socioeconomic and humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip, including that resulting from the Israeli military operations and the imposition of a blockade consisting of the prolonged closure of border crossings and severe restrictions on the movement of persons and goods, as well as the continued impeding of the reconstruction process by Israel, the occupying Power, which has detrimentally affected every aspect of the lives of the civilian population, especially women and children, in the Gaza Strip,

Stressing the importance of providing assistance, especially emergency assistance, to alleviate the dire socioeconomic and humanitarian situation being faced by Palestinian women and their families,

Emphasizing the importance of increasing the role of women in peacebuilding and decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and the peaceful resolution of conflicts as part of efforts to ensure the safety and well-being of all women in the region, and stressing the importance of their equal participation and involvement in all efforts for the achievement, maintenance and promotion of peace and security,

⁶ See General Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

⁷ United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

1. *Reaffirms* that the Israeli occupation remains the major obstacle for Palestinian women with regard to their advancement, self-reliance and integration into the development of their society, and stresses the importance of efforts to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution and to ensure their equal participation and involvement in all efforts for the achievement, maintenance and promotion of peace and security;

2. *Calls upon* the international community, in this regard, to continue to provide urgently needed assistance, especially emergency assistance, and services in an effort to alleviate the dire humanitarian crisis being faced by Palestinian women and their families and to help in the reconstruction of relevant Palestinian institutions, with the integration of a gender perspective into all of its international assistance programmes, and commends the implementation of the August 2009 plan of the Palestinian Authority for building the institutions of an independent Palestinian State within a twenty-four-month period and the significant achievements made, as confirmed by international institutions, including the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank;

3. *Demands* that Israel, the occupying Power, comply fully with the provisions and principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,⁸ the Regulations annexed to the Hague Convention IV of 1907,⁹ the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of

War, of 12 August 1949,¹⁰ and all other relevant rules, principles and instruments of international law, including the International Covenants on Human Rights,⁶ in order to protect the rights of Palestinian women and their families;

4. *Urges* the international community to continue to give special attention to the promotion and protection of the human rights of Palestinian women and girls and to intensify its measures to improve the difficult conditions being faced by Palestinian women and their families living under Israeli occupation;

5. *Calls upon* Israel to facilitate the return of all refugees and displaced Palestinian women and children to their homes and properties, in compliance with the relevant United Nations resolutions;

6. *Stresses* the urgent need for sustained and active international involvement, including by the Quartet, to support both parties in resuming, advancing and accelerating the peace process negotiations for the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement, on the basis of United Nations resolutions, the Quartet road map to a permanent two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict¹¹ and the Arab Peace Initiative adopted by the Council of the League of Arab States at its fourteenth session;¹²

7. *Requests* the Commission on the Status of Women to continue to monitor and take action with regard to the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women,² in particular paragraph 260 concerning Palestinian women and children,

⁸ General Assembly resolution 217 A (III).

⁹ See Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *The Hague Conventions and Declarations of 1899 and 1907* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1915).

¹⁰ United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 75, No. 973.

¹¹ S/2003/529, annex.

¹² A/56/1026-S/2002/932, annex II, resolution 14/221.

the Beijing Platform for Action³ and the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”,⁴

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to review the situation, to assist Palestinian women by all available means, including those set out in his report,¹ and to submit to the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-seventh session a report, including information provided by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

*48th plenary meeting
27 July 2012*

2012/23. Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 66/225 of 22 December 2011,

Recalling also its resolution 2011/41 of 28 July 2011,

Guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations affirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and recalling relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 252 (1968) of 21 May 1968, 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973, 465 (1980) of 1 March 1980 and 497 (1981) of 17 December 1981,

Recalling the resolutions of the tenth emergency special session of the General

Assembly, including resolutions ES-10/13 of 21 October 2003, ES-10/14 of 8 December 2003, ES-10/15 of 20 July 2004 and ES-10/17 of 15 December 2006,

Reaffirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,¹³ to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

Recalling the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,¹⁴ the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights² and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,¹⁵ and reaffirming that these human rights instruments must be respected in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan,

Stressing the importance of the revival and acceleration of serious and credible negotiations within the Middle East peace process on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978, 1397 (2002) of 12 March 2002, 1515 (2003) of 19 November 2003, 1544 (2004) of 19 May 2004 and 1850 (2008) of 16 December 2008, the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative¹⁶ and the Quartet road map,¹⁷ as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,

Reaffirming the principle of the permanent sovereignty of peoples under foreign occupation over their natural

¹³ United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 75, No. 973.

¹⁴ See General Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

¹⁵ 3 United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

¹⁶ A/56/1026-S/2002/932, annex II, resolution 14/221.

¹⁷ S/2003/529, annex.

resources, and expressing concern in that regard about the exploitation of natural resources by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan,

Convinced that the Israeli occupation has gravely impeded the efforts to achieve sustainable development and a sound economic environment in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, and expressing grave concern about the consequent deterioration of economic and living conditions,

Commending, in that regard, the efforts of the Palestinian Authority to improve the economic and social situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, especially in the areas of governance, the rule of law and human rights, livelihoods and productive sectors, education and culture, health, social protection, infrastructure and water,

Gravely concerned, in that regard, about the accelerated construction of settlements and implementation of other related measures by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly in and around occupied East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan, in violation of international humanitarian law and relevant United Nations resolutions,

Expressing deep concern about the rising incidence of violence, harassment, provocation, vandalism and incitement by illegal armed Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, against Palestinian civilians, including children, and their properties, including historic and religious sites, and agricultural lands,

Gravely concerned by the serious repercussions on the economic and social

conditions of the Palestinian people caused by the construction by Israel of the wall and its associated regime inside the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and the resulting violation of their economic and social rights, including the right to work, to health, to education, to property, to an adequate standard of living and to freedom of access and movement,

Recalling, in that regard, the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice on the Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory,¹⁸ and General Assembly resolution ES-10/15, and stressing the need to comply with the obligations mentioned therein,

Expressing grave concern at the extensive destruction by Israel, the occupying Power, of properties, including the increased demolition of homes, economic institutions, historical landmarks, agricultural lands and orchards, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in particular in connection with its construction of the wall, contrary to international law, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem,

Expressing grave concern also over the continuing and intensifying policy of home demolitions, evictions and revocation of residency rights, which have caused the further displacement of the Palestinian population in and around occupied East Jerusalem, as well as measures to further isolate the city from its natural Palestinian environs, including through the accelerated construction of settlements, the construction of the wall, the confiscation of land and the

¹⁸ See A/ES-10/273 and Corr.1; see also Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Advisory Opinion, I.C.J. Reports 2004, p. 136.

continued imposition of checkpoints, which have seriously exacerbated the already critical socioeconomic situation being faced by the Palestinian population,

Expressing grave concern further about Israeli military operations and the continuing Israeli policy of closures and severe restrictions on the movement of persons and goods, including humanitarian personnel and food, medical, fuel, construction material and other essential supplies, via the imposition of crossing closures, checkpoints and a permit regime throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the consequent negative impact on the socioeconomic situation of the Palestinian people, in particular the Palestinian refugee population, which remains that of a humanitarian crisis,

Taking note of recent developments regarding the situation of access to the Gaza Strip, although grave hardships continue to prevail as a result of the prolonged Israeli closures and severe economic and movement restrictions that in effect amount to a blockade, calling in that regard for the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1860 (2009) of 8 January 2009 with a view to ensuring the full opening of the border crossings for the sustained and regular movement of persons and goods, including humanitarian aid, commercial flows and construction materials, and emphasizing the need for security for all civilian populations,

Deploring the heavy casualties among civilians, including hundreds of children and women, the internal displacement of thousands of civilians and widespread damage to homes, vital civilian infrastructure, hospitals, schools, food supply installations, economic, industrial and agricultural properties, and several

United Nations facilities in the Gaza Strip, which have a grave impact on the provision of vital health and social services to Palestinian women and their families and on their socioeconomic living conditions, all caused by the military operations between December 2008 and January 2009,

Recalling, in that regard, the relevant United Nations reports, including those of the Economic and Social Council, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the Human Rights Council,

Expressing deep concern about the short- and long-term detrimental impact of such widespread destruction and the hampering of the reconstruction process by Israel, the occupying Power, on the socioeconomic and humanitarian conditions of the Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip, and calling in that regard for the immediate acceleration of the reconstruction process in the Gaza Strip with the assistance of the donor countries, including the disbursement of funds pledged at the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 2 March 2009,

Gravely concerned about various reports of the United Nations and specialized agencies regarding the substantial aid dependency caused by prolonged border closures, inordinate rates of unemployment, widespread poverty and severe humanitarian hardships, including food insecurity and rising health-related problems, including high levels of malnutrition, among the Palestinian people, especially children, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Expressing grave concern at the deaths and injuries caused to civilians, including

children, women and peaceful demonstrators, and emphasizing that the Palestinian civilian population must be protected in accordance with international humanitarian law,

Emphasizing the importance of the safety and well-being of all civilians, and calling for the cessation of all acts of violence, including all acts of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction, and all firing of rockets,

Expressing deep concern that thousands of Palestinians, including many children and women, continue to be held in Israeli prisons or detention centres under harsh conditions, including unhygienic conditions, solitary confinement, excessive use of administrative detention, lack of proper medical care and denial of family visits and of due process, that impair their well-being, and expressing deep concern also about any ill-treatment and harassment of Palestinian prisoners and all reports of torture, while taking note of the recent agreement reached on conditions of detention in Israeli prisons and calling for its full and immediate implementation,

Conscious of the urgent need for the reconstruction and development of the economic and social infrastructure of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as the urgent need to address the humanitarian crisis facing the Palestinian people, including by ensuring the unimpeded provision of humanitarian assistance and the sustained and regular flow of persons and goods into and out of the Gaza Strip,

Recognizing the efforts being undertaken by the Palestinian Authority, with international support, to rebuild, reform and strengthen its damaged institutions and promote good governance, emphasizing the need to preserve the Palestinian national institutions and infrastructure, commending

in that regard the implementation of the 2009 plan of the Palestinian Authority, entitled “Palestine: Ending the Occupation, Establishing the State”, for building the institutions of an independent Palestinian State within a twenty-four-month period and the significant achievements that have been brought about, as confirmed by international institutions, including the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in their reports to the meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians held on 13 April 2011, and acknowledging the development plan of the Palestinian Authority for the period 2011–2013,

Commending, in that regard, the important work being done by the United Nations, the specialized agencies and the donor community in support of the economic and social development of the Palestinian people in line with their national development and State-building plan, completed at the end of August 2011, as well as the assistance being provided in the humanitarian field,

Stressing the importance of national unity among the Palestinian people, and emphasizing the need for the respect and preservation of the territorial integrity and unity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Calling upon both parties to fulfill their obligations under the road map in cooperation with the Quartet,

1. *Calls for* the full opening of the border crossings of the Gaza Strip, in line with Security Council resolution 1860 (2009), to ensure humanitarian access as well as the sustained and regular flow of persons and goods and the lifting of all movement restrictions imposed on the Palestinian people, including those

restrictions arising from ongoing Israeli military operations and the multilayered closures system, and for other urgent measures to be taken to alleviate the serious humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which is critical in the Gaza Strip, and calls for compliance by Israel, the occupying Power, with all of its legal obligations under international humanitarian law and United Nations resolutions in that regard;

2. *Stresses* the need to preserve the territorial contiguity, unity and integrity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as to and from the outside world;

3. *Also stresses* the need to preserve and develop Palestinian national institutions and infrastructure for the provision of vital public services to the Palestinian civilian population and to contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights, including economic and social rights;

4. *Demands* that Israel comply with the Protocol on Economic Relations between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, signed in Paris on 29 April 1994;¹⁹

5. *Calls upon* Israel to restore and replace civilian properties, vital infrastructure, agricultural lands and governmental institutions that have been damaged or destroyed as a result of its military operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory;

6. *Reiterates the call* for the full implementation of the Agreement on

Movement and Access of 15 November 2005, particularly the urgent and uninterrupted reopening of all crossings into the Gaza Strip, which is crucial to ensuring the passage of foodstuffs and essential supplies, including construction materials and adequate fuel supplies, as well as to ensuring the unhindered access of the United Nations and related agencies and regular commercial flows necessary for economic recovery to and within the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and emphasizes the need for security for all civilian populations;

7. *Calls upon* all parties to respect the rules of international humanitarian law and to refrain from violence against the civilian population, in accordance with the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949;¹

8. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources, and calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of those resources;

9. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to cease its destruction of homes and properties, economic institutions and agricultural lands and orchards in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan;

10. *Also calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to end immediately its exploitation of natural resources, including water and mining resources, and to cease the dumping of all kinds of waste materials in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, which gravely threaten their natural resources, namely, the water, land and energy resources, and

¹⁹ See A/49/180-S/1994/727, annex, entitled "Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area", annex IV.

present a serious environmental hazard and health threat to the civilian populations, and also calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, to remove all obstacles that obstruct implementation of critical environmental projects, including the sewage treatment plants in the Gaza Strip;

11. *Reaffirms* that the construction and expansion of Israeli settlements and related infrastructure in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, are illegal and constitute a major obstacle to economic and social development and to the achievement of peace, and calls for the full cessation of all settlement and settlement-related activity, including full cessation of all measures aimed at altering the demographic composition, legal status and character of the occupied territories, including, in particular, in and around Occupied East Jerusalem, in compliance with relevant Security Council resolutions and international law, including the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War;

12. *Also reaffirms* that the ongoing construction by Israel of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, is contrary to international law and is isolating East Jerusalem, fragmenting the West Bank and seriously debilitating the economic and social development of the Palestinian people, and calls in that regard for full compliance with the legal obligations mentioned in the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice rendered on 9 July 2004⁶ and in General Assembly resolution ES-10/15 and subsequent relevant resolutions;

13. *Calls upon* Israel to comply with the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons

in Time of War and to facilitate visits of the Syrian citizens of the occupied Syrian Golan whose family members reside in their mother homeland, the Syrian Arab Republic, via the Qunaitra entrance;

14. *Emphasizes* the importance of the work of United Nations organizations and agencies in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority;

15. *Reiterates* the importance of the revival and accelerated advancement of negotiations of the peace process on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 425 (1978), 1397 (2002), 1515 (2003), 1544 (2004) and 1850 (2008), the Madrid Conference, the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative⁴ and the Quartet road map,⁵ as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, in order to pave the way for the realization of the two-State solution of Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security within recognized borders, based on the pre-1967 borders, and the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement;

16. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the present resolution and to continue to include in the report of the United Nations Special Coordinator an update on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies;

17. *Decides* to include the item entitled “Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the

occupied Syrian Golan” in the agenda of its substantive session of 2013.

*47th plenary meeting
26 July 2012*

VI. UN SPECIAL COORDINATOR BRIEFS SECURITY COUNCIL ON THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST, INCLUDING THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION

On 17 September 2012, the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestinian Authority, Roberterry, briefed the Security Council on the Situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. Excerpts from the briefing are reproduced below (S/PV.6835):

...

Turning now to the briefing, it is nearly one year since the Secretary-General forwarded the Palestinian application for membership of the United Nations to the Council. At the same time, the Quartet set a framework for resumed dialogue, reaffirming that the only sustainable solution to the conflict was a negotiated one. Despite some positive and quiet engagement, the parties have not yet engaged in meaningful dialogue on the core issues. More recently, following his meeting with the Foreign Ministers of States members of the League of Arab States in Cairo on 5 September, President Abbas expressed his intention to commence preparations to pursue an upgrade in the status at the United Nations through the General Assembly.

Today, amid a fiscal crisis and related social unrest in the West Bank, the stakes are growing. The main obstacles remain political: unresolved issues between the parties, the continued occupation and the ongoing Palestinian division. However, we can no longer simply count on the pursuit of short-term and mutual confidence-building measures aimed at starting talks. Such

measures are not alternatives to a negotiated peace.

The lack of progress on the political track and the ongoing conflict and occupation put at risk the very viability of the two-State solution. There is no more sobering a manifestation of such a risk than the financial and economic crisis currently afflicting the Palestinian Authority.

Starting on 4 September, thousands of Palestinian demonstrators in the West Bank took to the streets to protest the increase in value added tax (VAT), recent rises in the price of fuel and most basic commodities, and the deferred payment of August Government salaries. Unions and taxi and truck drivers repeatedly blocked city centres and joined the protesters. One protester, who set himself on fire in Ramallah, remains in serious condition. Attempts by another two protesters, including one with his child, were thwarted.

Although the Palestinian security forces handled the protests with professionalism and restraint, the demonstrations turned violent on 10 September and dozens were injured in clashes. The situation in Gaza also became tense when a teenager died on 2

September after he torched himself to death to protest his family's poor living conditions.

The Government of Prime Minister Fayyad announced an emergency economic package on 11 September, including a reduction of the VAT to 15 per cent and a return to pre-September prices for diesel and gas. Such measures will provide temporary relief to the average Palestinian, who bears the brunt of this crisis. Absent a predictable and immediate injection of funds, the Palestinian Authority will be unable to meet its recurrent financial requirements, which amount to less than \$1 billion. Such a mounting fiscal crisis would paralyse the institutions of the Palestinian Authority.

In a few days the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of International Assistance to Palestinians (AHLC), meeting in New York, will offer a sober account of the Palestinian Authority's very grave fiscal situation. Despite Prime Minister Fayyad's commendable efforts, he is confronted with the effects of a decrease in foreign aid, the failure of donor countries to fulfill their financial pledges, and slowing economic activity. As our report to the AHLC will highlight, such a slowdown is dampening hopes of reducing the high unemployment, poverty and vulnerability that still affect thousands of Palestinians. Against that background and as an immediate step to ensure the Palestinian Authority's fiscal viability in the short term, we urgently call on donors, in particular from the region, to increase their contributions and provide the much-needed funds to bridge, in a timely manner, the current gap.

The Israeli Government is also called upon to do more to alleviate the Palestinian Authority's burden and provide a much-needed economic impetus in the medium

term. On 11 September, Prime Minister Netanyahu announced the transfer, in advance, of 225 million new shekels in tax money it collects for the Palestinians. This is welcome, and we encourage Israel to take further steps in that direction. Greater facilitation by the Israeli Government, in particular by easing restrictions to allow for the private sector to develop, would contribute to stimulating economic activity and addressing the Palestinian Authority's fiscal sustainability in the medium term.

Developments on the ground also do not support efforts to overcome the political stalemate. Settlement activity continued during the reporting period. On 9 September, the Israeli Government endorsed an Israeli higher-education committee decision to upgrade the status of a college in the settlement of Ariel to that of a university. While it is pending final approval, that decision would lead to a further encroachment into the West Bank. On 11 September, Israeli authorities reportedly issued orders to confiscate some 1,500 dunams of land near Nablus. On 2 September, the outpost of Migron was evacuated following a High Court ruling and its approximately 50 families moved to another settlement nearby. The United Nations position remains that settlement construction in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, whether on private land or elsewhere, is contrary to international law and should be brought to a halt.

Several vehicles were vandalized, and a monastery in Latrun and a mosque near Hebron were desecrated on 4 and 11 September, respectively, as part of so-called price-tag activities following the evacuation of Migron. Thirty-five incidents involving settler violence resulted in injuries to 15 Palestinians as well as extensive property damage.

Palestinians were attacked in Jerusalem on 5 and 7 September, and Israeli police have actively pursued the attackers. We note the Israeli Government's consistent condemnation of such attacks. Israeli police also arrested settler youth in connection with the 16 August Molotov cocktail attack near Hebron. Yet we continue to urge the Israeli authorities to act decisively against acts of violence perpetrated by Israeli citizens.

Palestinian violence against Israelis in the West Bank, mostly stone-throwing at vehicles, resulted in injuries to seven Israeli citizens as well as material damage. On 9 September, a Palestinian driver killed an Israeli security guard in a suspected deliberate hit-and-run accident near the barrier and the Oranit settlement.

Citing security concerns, the Israel Defense Forces conducted 247 operations in the occupied West Bank, in which 110 Palestinians were injured and 186 arrested. The majority of injuries and detentions took place during Palestinian demonstrations, including against the barrier, which deviates from the Green line in contravention of the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice (A/ES-10/273).

Much of the reported violence continues to occur in Area C, an area fundamental to the contiguity of the West Bank and the viability of a future Palestinian State. Palestinian access to and development of Area C is vital to accommodate the natural growth of the Palestinian population. Developing natural resources is also essential for the private sector to drive the economic growth needed for a rapidly growing population. Alongside the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and other international partners, the United Nations has engaged the Israeli Government on a series of planning and social infrastructure

projects in Area C. An additional package of 18 education and health projects for USAID has just been approved.

The United Nations remains concerned about the scale of ongoing demolitions, which in the reporting period included 11 residential structures. We note that there is an ongoing dialogue between the concerned vulnerable communities and the Government of Israel. While there are initial indications that plans for six to eight Palestinian communities may soon be approved, greater progress in addressing the needs of Palestinian communities in Area C is urgently required so as to adequately address the long-standing developmental needs of those communities. Palestinian security forces have continued working to maintain law and order in the West Bank. On 5 September, a senior Palestinian Authority security commander was shot dead in Jenin, where extensive security operations have taken place since the death of its Governor in May. For the Palestinian Authority security forces to continue operating effectively, it is necessary that they receive a delivery of equipment that is currently awaiting approval for import.

On 13 September, the nineteenth anniversary of the Oslo agreement, all pre-Oslo Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails observed a one-day hunger strike protesting their continued imprisonment and in solidarity with other long-term hunger strikers. The Secretary-General remains concerned about the life-threatening condition of three of those hunger strikers, and calls for a swift resolution of their cases. On a positive note, visits of family members from Gaza to Palestinian detainees have continued on a weekly basis since they were resumed on 16 July with the facilitation of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The Palestinian Central Elections Commission continued preparations for local elections, which are scheduled to take place in the West Bank on 20 October. In accordance with the electoral law, the nomination period, which began on 1 September, concluded on 11 September. That constitutes an important benchmark, and we encourage the Palestinian Authority to conduct that poll as scheduled, with all necessary support extended to the Central Elections Commission. The last such elections were only partially held in 2005, and some municipal councils have not been voted into office since the 1970s.

In Gaza, the United Nations released a report entitled “Gaza 2020” on 27 August. The report highlighted the ever- greater stress that population growth in Gaza will place on the provision of clean water, electricity, healthcare services and education, which are inadequate now and will not keep pace with the needs of a population that is projected to grow to 2.1 million people by 2020. The implications, if there is no change to the current untenable situation, should be a reason for alarm for all concerned. Alongside efforts to make progress on the peace process, we must all work to ensure that calm is realized, the Palestinian divide ends, and the closure regime is lifted. In that sobering context, several weeks of calm were yet again interrupted on 26 and 31 August, when home-made rockets fired from Gaza hit the Israeli town of Sderot, causing damage to infrastructure. A Grad rocket fired at the Israeli town of Netivot on 9 August caused extensive material damage to a house without injuring residents. In total, 50 projectiles were fired from Gaza into Israel, including six Grad rockets and 17 mortar shells. Israeli forces conducted five incursions and 10 airstrikes into Gaza, resulting in six Palestinian militants killed, while four Palestinian militants and six

civilians were also injured. Israeli strikes at tunnels also resulted in one Palestinian killed and one injured. We continue to condemn all indiscriminate rocket attacks from Gaza into Israel, which must stop. We also urge Israel to show maximum restraint.

Efforts to promote Palestinian reconciliation continue to face obstacles. At the meeting of the League of Arab States held on 5 September, President Abbas reiterated that general elections were the key to true reconciliation. For its part, Hamas reiterated that no polling should take place prior to reconciliation. On 2 September the de facto authorities in Gaza reshuffled the ruling Cabinet, but claimed that efforts towards Palestinian reconciliation would not be impacted.

A unified Palestinian polity is central to realizing a two-State solution. The Quartet has also been clear in stating that the situation in and around Gaza would remain unsustainable as long as the West Bank and Gaza are not reunited under a legitimate Palestinian Authority that adheres to the Palestine Liberation Organization’s commitments. In this context, we welcome recent statements of support, also by the League of Arab States, for Egyptian facilitation efforts to bring the Palestinian factions back to the table.

Lifting the closure regime, in accordance with resolution 1860 (2009), and Gaza’s recovery and long-term economic growth remain fundamental United Nations objectives. The long-term growth of Gaza’s economy will depend on reactivating the productive private sector by allowing it to have easier access to necessary raw materials, capital inputs and its traditional markets, namely, the West Bank and Israel. Lifting restrictions on the entry of aggregate, iron bar and cement would not only enable the growth of the private sector, but also

provide an additional source of revenue for the Palestinian Authority through taxation at the point of entry. In the meantime, a steady flow of approvals for works involving dual-use material should be maintained. We appreciate the ongoing cooperation with the Israeli authorities and we expect approval this week of an additional substantial package of United Nations projects, including housing, schools, shelters and solid waste treatment infrastructure.

...

In conclusion, in a volatile and rapidly changing region, the vision of the two-State solution and the achievements of the Palestinian Authority are elements of stability and progress that should not be lost, but rather maintained and realized in full without further delay. For one, that means nothing short of the unequivocal support of the international community for the Palestinian Authority and collective intensified efforts to address the fiscal difficulties presently faced and preserve the institutional gains made to date. Israel also

has a special responsibility and interest in ensuring the Palestinian Authority's viability. It is now even more important for the parties to further engage in positive steps, show restraint and refrain from provocative acts that risk inflaming an already delicate environment.

By the end of this year, yet another timeline set by the Quartet for reaching a comprehensive, negotiated settlement will have lapsed. In circumstances of prolonged political stalemate and an increasingly fragile situation on the ground, the time has come for the international community to seriously reassess its role in resolving the conflict. In that regard, the Secretary General sincerely hopes that Quartet partners, in consultation with the parties, will look beyond prescriptive timelines to chart a new credible political way ahead in the coming months. Both parties will suffer the consequences of failure to act responsibly and of sliding further away from the two-State solution and regional peace, as envisaged in the relevant Security Council resolutions and the Arab Peace Initiative.

VII. SECRETARY-GENERAL REPORTS ON ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS IN THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY, INCLUDING EAST JERUSALEM.

On 18 September 2012, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon submitted under GA agenda item 53 a report on Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan (A/67/375) pursuant to General Assembly resolution 66/78. The conclusions and recommendations contained in the report are reproduced below.

VIII. Conclusions and recommendations

46. Despite the past commitments of Israel to freeze settlement activity, the Government of Israel continues to encourage the transfer of its population into the Occupied Palestinian Territory, by expanding settlements and building additional housing units.

47. The number of settlements, the number of Israeli settlers and the associated security measures designed to protect them and their freedom of movement and expanse of territory under the de facto jurisdiction of regional and local settlement councils violate the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people. The settlements present an existential threat to the viability of a future Palestinian state. The Secretary-

General notes that the International Court of Justice described the violation by Israel of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination as the violation of an *erga omnes* obligation. Therefore that violation is a matter of concern to all States (see A/ES-10/273 and Corr.1, para. 155).

48. Acts of violence committed by Israeli settlers against Palestinians, their property and places of worship continue to occur regularly throughout the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Israel, as the occupying Power, must take all measures to ensure the protection of the Palestinians and their property in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, from all such acts of violence.¹ While there has been a decrease in the number of injuries, the continued occurrence of violence and attacks is alarming. The Secretary-General condemns all acts of violence destined to cause fear and terror among civilian populations in the occupied Palestinian territories and calls upon the Israel Defense Forces to ensure public order and accountability for all acts of violence in a non-discriminatory manner.² The Israel Defense Forces should take all necessary measures to prevent and respond

¹ See articles 43 and 46 of the Hague Regulations and article 27 of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

² See article 5 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

to violence perpetrated by Israeli settlers with the same thoroughness and promptness as in the case of acts of violence perpetrated against settlers. Failure to do so and the lack of accountability when such acts have already occurred contribute to a culture of impunity that allows such acts to continue. That situation constitutes a violation of the obligation of Israel to protect the right to life and to physical integrity of the Palestinian people and to maintain public order in the occupied territory. The Secretary-General is also deeply concerned by attacks on places of worship and the potential such attacks have for producing negative consequences on public order in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

49. The Government of Israel must respect its obligations under international law by freezing all settlement activity in line with the road map and ceasing measures that amount to the transfer of its own population into the occupied territory. The Secretary-General has called on the Government of Israel to begin the process of re-integrating the settler population into its own territory, with a view to respecting its obligations under article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention and putting an end to the violations of human rights that are linked to the presence of settlements, especially the right to self-determination.

VIII. SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR REPORTS ON THE SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES OCCUPIED SINCE 1967

On 19 September 2012, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon submitted to the Members of the General Assembly the report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, Richard Falk, submitted in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 5/1. The recommendations contained in the report are reproduced below (A/67/379):

VII. Recommendations

92. The Special Rapporteur calls on the Government of Israel to desist from

settling its population in the occupied Palestinian territory and begin the process of dismantling its settlements and returning its

citizens to its own territory, namely on the Israeli side of the Green Line, in accordance with international law, numerous Security Council and General Assembly resolutions and the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the wall.

93. The Special Rapporteur calls on the Government of Israel to publicly inform all businesses with operations in or related to its settlements of the international legal ramifications of such operations, including in relation to civil liability in third countries.

94. The Special Rapporteur calls on the Government of Israel to immediately move forward with reparations to the Palestinian people — whether through land and monetary compensation or otherwise — in full and transparent consultation with affected Palestinians, for all activities related to its settlement enterprise since 1967, also ensuring that land used by businesses is restored to its condition status quo ante unless improved.

95. The Special Rapporteur calls on the businesses highlighted in this report, as a matter of urgency, to take transparent action to comply with the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, the Global Compact and relevant international laws and standards, with respect to their activities connected with the Government of Israel and its settlements and wall in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem. This should include, as a first step, immediately suspending all operations, including the supply of products and services, which aid in the establishment or maintenance of Israeli settlements.

96. The Special Rapporteur calls on the businesses highlighted in this report, with respect to companies that are already signed up to the Global Compact, to be fully aware of the relevant integrity measures, particularly in the case of allegations of

systematic or egregious abuses.¹ Company plans to exit the occupied Palestinian territory should identify and address any adverse human rights consequences arising from their exit and from past business activities.

97. The Special Rapporteur calls on the businesses highlighted in this report, with respect to any company maintaining its operations in the occupied Palestinian territory, to conduct heightened due diligence in accordance with the Guiding Principles and international humanitarian law. Such companies should be able to demonstrate their own efforts to mitigate any adverse impact and be prepared to accept any consequences — reputation, financial or legal — of continuing their operations.

98. The Special Rapporteur calls on civil society to actively pursue legal and political redress against non-complying businesses, where necessary in their own national legal and political frameworks, especially where allegations of war crimes and crimes against humanity can be substantiated in relation to settlement activities.

99. The Special Rapporteur calls on civil society to vigorously pursue initiatives to boycott, divest and sanction the businesses highlighted in this report, within their own national contexts, until such time as they bring their policies and practices into line with international laws and standards, as well as the Global Compact.

100. The Special Rapporteur calls on civil society to share resources and information, including through establishing transnational collaborative networks and other initiatives, as a way of promoting

¹ www.unglobalcompact.org/AboutTheGC/IntegrityMeasures/index.html.

transparency and accountability in relation to businesses involved in the Israeli settlement agenda.

101. The Special Rapporteur calls on the international community to transparently investigate the business activities of companies registered in their own respective countries, especially those highlighted in this report, that profit from Israel's settlements, and take appropriate action to end such practices and ensure appropriate reparation for affected Palestinians.

102. The Special Rapporteur calls on the international community to consider requesting an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice regarding the

responsibility of businesses in relation to economic activities of settlements that are established in violation of article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

103. The Special Rapporteur calls on the international community to urge the General Assembly to prepare a document linking compliance with Global Compact guidelines with international human rights law in situations of belligerent occupation, with attention to moral, political and legal obligations associated with business operations in the occupied Palestinian territory.

IX. SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSES AD-HOC LIAISON COMMITTEE

On 23 September 2012, the United Nations and the Under-Secretary General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman hosted a meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee Members and other major donor countries in New York under the chairmanship of the Norwegian Foreign Minister Espen Barth Eide. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon addressed the meeting in a statement that was delivered by Mr. Feltman: (SG/SM/14524, PAL/2153). The following is the text of Mr. Ban's message:

I am pleased to convey greetings to Finance Minister Qasis, Deputy Foreign Minister Ayalon, High Representative Ashton, Quartet Representative Blair, and the other participants in this meeting. I thank Foreign Minister Jonas Gahr Støre for the key role that Norway continues to play in convening and chairing this important forum.

Today's meeting comes at a critical time of rapid change and immense challenges in the Middle East and beyond. Recent weeks have underscored the fragility of the current situation. In this context, the vision of a two-State solution and the achievements of the Palestinian Authority are key elements of stability and progress.

They must be maintained and realized in full without further delay.

Since April 2011, when the United Nations report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee concluded that Palestinian Authority institutions were sufficient for a functioning government of a State, further achievements have been registered. We commend the achievements of the entire Palestinian Authority under the leadership of Prime Minister Fayyad.

However, the lack of progress on the political track, the ongoing conflict and occupation, the expansion of settlements, and the continued Palestinian divide mean that the very viability of the two-State solution is now in peril. The dire financial

situation of the Palestinian Authority presents a serious additional risk, as the protests in the West Bank serve to alert us. The international community must strengthen its support to the Palestinian Authority. Failure to do so at this critical juncture could have consequences that may prove widely destabilizing.

I urge donors to meet the immediate shortfall of \$400 million. But we must also break the annual cycle of fiscal crises that hamper the Palestinian Authority's ability to sustain its state-building achievements. Sustainable economic growth that benefits Palestinians while increasing the Palestinian Authority's revenue through taxation is essential now more than ever.

I welcome the recent exchange of letters between the Palestinian Authority and the Government of Israel dealing with revenue capture, and I hope to see the quick finalization and implementation of the associated technical agreements. I also hope to see further progress in easing movement and access restrictions to allow the Palestinian private sector to generate economic growth. United Nations agencies, funds and programmes are working side by side with the Palestinian Authority to implement its ambitious institution-building plan. We will continue to do so. But Israel also has a special responsibility.

Area C, which represents 60 per cent of the West Bank, is fundamental to the contiguity of the West Bank and to the viability of a future Palestinian State. Palestinian access to land in Area C is essential to accommodate the Palestinian population and to enable the development of a dynamic Palestinian private sector. In East

Jerusalem, there is a need to revitalize the economy while strengthening the delivery of services, including in the health sector.

In Gaza, the United Nations has played a leading role in reconstruction efforts. We must accelerate our progress across a range of sectors — including education, health and the provision of water and electricity — if Gaza is to meet the demands of a population projected to grow from 1.5 million to 2.1 million people by 2020. Allowing exports to Israel and transfers to the West Bank will be an essential next step in revitalizing Gaza's economy. Our goal must remain the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1860 (2009), including the lifting of the closure.

However, improvements on the ground will complement but not replace much needed progress towards a final status agreement. The current situation is not sustainable. By the end of this year, yet another timeline for reaching a negotiated solution will have lapsed. The establishment of a viable, democratic and sovereign State of Palestine living side by side with Israel is long overdue. It is time for the international community to work seriously with the parties in the coming months to chart a new, credible political path towards achieving that vision.

Foreign Minister Støre, I welcome your continued effort to promote trilateral dialogue. I hope the Committee's discussions today will help ensure continued support for the Palestinian Authority while strengthening the necessary cooperation with Israel. Thank you again for your support, and I wish you well in your deliberations.