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## **Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP): Appeal 2009 for occupied Palestinian territory**

### **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Living conditions for most Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) have continued to deteriorate in 2008. The year began with a renewed sense of hope for progress, following the resumption of relations between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the international community's full endorsement of the Palestinian Authority's (PA) ambitious Reform and Development Plan (PRDP). Throughout 2008, the PA has proceeded with a series of significant and tangible reforms, reducing its fiscal deficit, containing its wage bill and improving security conditions in the West Bank. However, growth targets projected in the PA's development plan have recently been revised downwards, as economic productivity continues to decline.

This is in large part due to conditions in Gaza, where the ongoing Israeli-imposed blockade has crippled the private sector, driving unprecedented numbers of Palestinians into unemployment and poverty. However, it also reflects continued uncertainties in large parts of the West Bank—notwithstanding the removal of some obstacles to movement and access during the year, data indicates an ever-increasing number of Israeli checkpoints, causing further social and economic fragmentation. Global rises in food prices over the past 12 months and reduced domestic agricultural yields due to adverse weather conditions have placed further strain on Palestinian coping mechanisms. This has led in turn to further increases in household food insecurity in both Gaza and the West Bank, despite ongoing large-scale food aid programmes.

The situation has been exacerbated by ongoing internal Palestinian conflict. Despite sustained regional efforts at fostering internal Palestinian reconciliation, the West Bank and Gaza remain divided, with ordinary Palestinians, particularly in Gaza, paying the price. Although the intense internal bloodshed of 2007 in Gaza was not repeated in 2008, violence has continued. Internal divisions have also led to disruption of basic services, including health, water and sanitation and community services for the most vulnerable. Casualties as a result of Israeli-Palestinian conflict have also decreased since an Egyptian-brokered 'truce' between Gaza and southern Israel took effect in June 2008. However, improvements in the security situation have not been accompanied by a reduction in border restrictions for persons and goods and Gaza's established crossings remain for the most part sealed off. Tunnel smuggling now plays a significant role in the economy.

Palestinians in the oPt are facing a crisis that affects all aspects of their daily life. It is, above all, a crisis of human dignity, with the entire population unable to exercise its basic rights – to movement, self-determination, employment and basic services. They are increasingly left dependent on humanitarian assistance, largely in the form of food aid and cash handouts. In view of the increased need for relief assistance, United Nations (UN) agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) participating in the Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) are seeking a more focused humanitarian response in 2009, with better targeted interventions designed to meet the most urgent needs of vulnerable populations. This has been achieved through a planning process that was more consultative and inclusive than in previous years, involving several hundred actors in a series of regional and sectoral workshops. The process produced a focused Common Humanitarian Action Plan (CHAP) and prioritised response plans in each sector.

During 2009, humanitarian assistance programmes will include a range of protection strategies that seek to address access related constraints, including through improved monitoring and more strategic advocacy efforts. To ensure complementarity with the PRDP, and in line with global humanitarian reform efforts, the oPt CAP 2009 includes an early recovery component. This does not imply additional projects, but rather a more strategic approach to humanitarian assistance, through identification of those relief activities with potential for contributing to longer term development goals. This approach will be further developed in 2009 to ensure harmony between immediate and longer term planning tools in the oPt.

The budget for the 2009 CAP stands at **\$ 462,309,538**. The document brings together 159 projects, including 96 from the NGO community and 63 from UN agencies. Through this appeal, humanitarian agencies will work to mitigate the worst impacts of the crisis on the most vulnerable Palestinians and stem further deterioration in living conditions, whilst also advocating for fundamental rights for Palestinians, in accordance with agreed principles of international humanitarian and human rights law.

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