



Secretary-General

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SECRETARY-GENERAL CALLS ON DONORS TO PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY TO 'INVEST NOW,

INVEST GENEROUSLY', REMAIN STEADFAST IN FINANCIAL COMMITMENT. IN PARIS REMARKS

Following are UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's remarks to the afternoon segment of the Donors' Meeting to Support the Palestinian Authority, in Paris, 17 December:

I have already had the privilege of addressing you this morning at the opening of this important conference. I am very pleased to have this additional opportunity to speak, together with my Quartet partners. I will be brief.

We all know that as we talk about peace, many people on both sides feel only the effects of ongoing conflict and deepening economic despair. Our words ring hollow in their ears. That is why one of the biggest challenges in the months ahead is to reduce the gap between our diplomatic efforts and the reality on the ground. And, at the same time, we must provide a sound basis for the Palestinian Authority to rebuild, reform and perform over the medium term.

The Palestinian Authority has given us the plan around which all of us can focus our efforts. Donors and international financial institutions have been rightly impressed by its realism and responsibility. This document should form the basis of a true compact: between the Palestinian Authority, donors, and Israel. Each player must do their part to make it a success.

I repeat my call on donors to invest now, to invest generously, and to remain steadfast in their financial commitment over the next 36 months. It is also crucial that Israel take genuine and meaningful steps to ease closure, without which Palestinian economic recovery cannot take place. It is crucial that the Palestinian Authority continue on the path of enhanced security performance, which will also require close Israeli cooperation. Increased freedom of movement in a context of improved security is vital to build a platform for peace.

I pledge the United Nations to doing its part over the next 36 months to assist the Palestinian Authority to implement its programme. Over twenty United Nations specialized agencies on the ground provide a broad range of dedicated expertise and rapid implementation capacity. They have long played an important role in directly supporting the Palestinian Authority's efforts.

The United Nations together with the Palestinian Authority has already taken strategic steps towards building credible institutions and addressing other long-term needs in the areas of recovery and development. And, in parallel, UN agencies led by UNRWA are ensuring the provision of basic services and social welfare to the refugees, who constitute 40 percent of the population.

Robert Serry, my new Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Representative to the Palestine Liberation Organisation and Palestinian Authority, and Envoy to the Quartet will lead the UN's efforts in this respect. Mr Serry, who has just visited the region, will take up his position full time in Jerusalem in January. He will work with the UN country team in the development of a medium-term programme strategy. We will also look for additional ways in which UN programming can provide quick and visible signs of progress for the Palestinian people.

Let me also stress the heavy responsibilities of the Quartet, and my determination as Secretary-General to ensure that it lives up to them. The Quartet combines the weight and legitimacy of major players, and is the author and custodian of the Road Map, itself endorsed by the Security Council in resolution 1515. All members have worked hard to revitalize the Quartet and ensure that it is an effective vehicle for coordination and harmonisation of international engagement in the peace process. I am confident that the Quartet will meet regularly over the coming period, and provide strong support for the process agreed by the parties at Annapolis. Indeed, the Quartet will be meeting later today, and we also look forward to engaging Arab League partners this evening.

As with Annapolis, so here in Paris, success depends not on what we say today, but on what we do tomorrow. Our support on the ground, no less than our political engagement, is vital to create an independent, viable State of Palestine, living side by side in peace and security with Israel, in accordance with Security Council resolutions.

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