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## Secretary-General's press encounter at Rawabi Project

**Ramallah, 1 February 2012**

SG: I am very pleased to be here with my delegation. I thank Mr. Al-Masri for his kind briefing on this very ambitious project and I thank you, Dr. Erekat, for accompanying me to this place. This is a very impressive place where we can see the real results of President Abbas' state building efforts.

These 6,000 units are providing housing to 40,000 people. This is quite impressive. I hope that this will bear some very speedy results. At the same time, I know that there are some difficulties, challenges. An access road will be important.

As Secretary-General of the United Nations, what I would like to ask Mr. Masri and the developers and contractors is that this city should be built in a sustainable way. Sustainable development would be a top priority for the United Nations for the coming many years. All these areas should provide good sanitation and be eco-friendly and should provide a decent life to all inhabitants here.

At the same time, I know that the people of Palestine are still suffering from lack of Middle East peace process. To live in a viable and independent and sovereign state of Palestine is the long overdue aspiration of the Palestinian people. That is why I am here. I have had very good meetings with Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Peres of Israel, and I am now going to meet with President Abbas and Prime Minister Fayyad of the Palestinian Authority.

The two-state vision where people of Palestine and Israel can live side by side in peace and security - that is a vision, a very good vision - agreed upon - but to realize this good vision, but I think both sides need to work harder. We are very much concerned about lack of progress. This peace process has been lagging during the last twenty years. Most recently, for two years there has been no progress. I am encouraged by recent dialogue which was initiated by the Jordanian Government in Amman. I would like to hope that these talks should not lose momentum, they should be kept sustainable way and for that to be possible, both sides should meet together with the sincerity, with the vision, with courage and determined will to resolve this issue of a common future for the Palestine people and Israeli people. This housing project is a very good one, a very impressive one, and I would like to support all this in a sustainable way. As the peace process should be in a sustainable way, this also should be sustainable economically, socially and environmentally.

This is my hope and I wish you all the best.

Thank you.